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BROWNIE AND THE COOK

There was once a little brownie, who lived in a coal cellar. Now a coal cellar is a curious place to live in; but then a brownie is a curious creature. He is not one of the fairies who flit about on butterfly wings. Of what use would they be in a coal cellar?

He is a sober, stay-at-home little elf. He is not much to look at, even if you do see him, which is not likely. He is only a little old man, about a foot high, all dressed in brown, with brown face and hands and a brown peaked cap. He is the color of a brown mouse and, like a mouse, he hides in corners of the kitchen and comes out after dark when nobody is about.

I said you were not likely to see him. I never did, and never knew anybody who did. Still I have heard many funny stories about brownies, and so I may as well tell you the adventures of a brownie who followed a family about from house to house for many years.

A good many persons had heard him, or thought they had. There were strange noises

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about the house. These noises might have been made by a mouse or a rat—or a brownie. However, nobody had ever seen him except the children. The three little boys and the three little girls said that he often came to play with them when they were alone. He was the nicest playfellow in the world, although he was hundreds of years old. He was full of fun and mischief, and up to all kinds of tricks, but he never did anybody any harm.

Brownie was supposed to live in the darkest corner of the cellar. Nobody knew why he had chosen it, or how he lived there, or what he lived upon. However, ever since the family could remember, a bowl of milk had always been put behind the cellar door for the brownie's supper. Perhaps he drank it—perhaps he didn't. Anyhow, the bowl was always found empty next morning.

THE NEW COOK

The old cook, who had lived all her life in the family, had never once forgotten to give Brownie his supper. But at last she died, and in her

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place came a young cook, who was very apt to forget everything. She was also careless and lazy, and disliked the trouble of putting a bowl of milk in the same place every night.

She didn't believe in brownies, she said, for she had never seen one. So she laughed at the other servants, who looked very sober and who always put a bowl of milk in its place, if they could do it without her seeing them.

One night when Brownie woke up at his usual hour for rising and looked around in search of his supper, he found nothing. At first he could not believe his eyes, and went looking and smelling about for his bowl of milk. He knew that it had not always been placed in the same corner lately, but this night he could not find it anywhere.

"This will never do," said he.

Being very hungry, he began to run about the coal cellar in search of something to eat. His eyes were like pussy's, but they could see nothing to eat because there was nothing to be seen. There was not even a potato paring, or a dry crust, or a bone such as Tiny, the dog, some-

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times brought into the coal cellar and left on the floor. There was nothing but a heap of coals and coal dust; and even a brownie cannot eat that, you know.

"I can't stand this," said the brownie, tightening his belt to make his poor little stomach feel less empty.

He had been asleep all day, as was his habit when there was nothing to do. Now he seemed ready to eat his own head, or his boots, or anything.

"What's to be done?" said he. "Since nobody brings my supper, I must go and get it."

He spoke quickly, for he always thought quickly, and made up his mind in a minute. To be sure it was a very little mind, like his little body. But he did the best he could with it, and was not a bad kind of old fellow, after all.

He had never done any harm in the home and had often done good. He frightened away all the rats, the mice, and the beetles, but not the crickets. He liked the crickets just as the old cook had. She said they were happy beings and always brought luck to the house. But the

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young cook could not bear them. She used to pour boiling water down their holes, and set basins of water for them to tumble into, so that they might be drowned.

So there was not even a cricket singing in the house when Brownie put his head out of his coal cellar door. He was surprised to find the door open. The old cook used to lock it every night; but the young cook had left that key, and the kitchen key, and the pantry key all hanging in the lock. Any thief might have come in and have gone all over the house without being found out.

"Hurrah, here's luck!" cried Brownie, tossing his cap up into the air, and bounding right into the kitchen. It was quite empty, but there was a good fire burning itself out—just for fun. The remains of a fine supper were spread on the table. There was still enough left for half a dozen people.

Would you like to know what there was? There was cream, and part of a large dish of pudding. There was lots of bread and butter and cheese, and half of an apple pie. There

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was a great jug of cider and another of milk, and several half-full glasses, and no end of dirty plates, knives, and forks. All were scattered about the table in the most untidy fashion. The servants had risen from their supper without putting anything away.

Brownie screwed up his little old face and gave a long whistle. You might not believe it, seeing he lived in a coal cellar, but really he liked tidiness, and always played his pranks on untidy people.

"Whew!" said he. "What a fine supper I shall have!"

He jumped on a chair and from there to the table. He did it so quietly that the huge black cat, which sat toasting her four white paws in front of the fire, just opened one eye and went to sleep again. She was called Muff because she was so fat and her fur was so long and soft.

She had tried to get her nose into the milk jug, but the jug was too small; and the pudding dish was too deep for her to reach except with

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one paw. She didn't care much for bread and cheese and apple pie, and besides she had had her supper. So after just walking around the table, she had jumped down from it and gone to sleep on the hearth.

But Brownie had no notion of going to sleep. He wanted his supper; and what a supper he did eat! He tried first one thing and then another, and then tried everything all over again. And what a lot he did drink! First he took milk, and then cider, and then mixed the two together in a way that was enough to make even a brownie sick. As it was, he had to loosen his belt several times, and at last he took it off altogether. But he must have had a great capacity for eating and drinking, since, after he had nearly cleared the table, he was just as lively as ever, and began to jump on the table as if he had had no supper at all.

On the table was a clean white tablecloth. You see it was only Monday and the cloth had not had time to get soiled, untidy as the cook was. And you know Brownie lived in a coal cellar, and his feet were black with running

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about in coal dust. So wherever he stepped, he left tracks behind, until at last the whole table-cloth was covered with them.

He tried to make the cloth as dirty as possible. Then he laughed loudly, leaped to the hearth, and began to tease the cat. He squeaked like a mouse, or chirped like a cricket, or buzzed like a fly. Poor pussy hid herself in the corner, and left him all to himself on the hearth, where he lay till morning.

At last, he heard a slight noise and thought the servants were getting up. So he jumped on the table again and ate up the few remaining crumbs for his breakfast. Then he ran to the coal cellar. He hid himself under the coal, and fell asleep for the day.

When the cook came down stairs to clear off the supper, there was nothing left to clear. Every bit of food was gone. The cheese looked as if a dozen mice had been nibbling it. There was no milk or cider left; but mice don't care for milk and cider. The apple pie was gone, too; and the dish was licked as clean as if the dog had been at it.

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"Oh, my white tablecloth—oh, my clean white tablecloth! What could have done it?" cried the cook.

It was covered with little black tracks just the size of a baby's foot. But babies don't wear shoes with nails in them, and they don't run about and climb on tables after all the family have gone to bed.

The cook was a little frightened at first; but her fear changed to anger when she saw the large black cat stretched on the hearth. Poor Muff had crept there for a little nap after Brownie had gone away.

"You nasty cat!" said she, as she rushed toward her. "It is you that ate up the supper. It is you that walked on my clean tablecloth with your dirty paws."

They were white paws and as clean as possible; but the cook never thought of that, any more than she did of the fact that cats don't usually drink cider or eat apple pie.

"I'll teach you to come stealing food in this way," said the cook. "Take that—and that—and that!"

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The cook took the broom and beat poor pussy till she ran away. She couldn't speak, you know, and tell the cook that it was Brownie who had done it all.

THE NEXT NIGHT

Next night, the cook thought she would make everything safe. So, instead of letting the cat sleep by the fire, she shut her up in the chilly coal cellar. She locked the door, put the key in her pocket, and went off to bed. She left the supper on the table as before.

When Brownie woke up and looked out of his hole, again there was no supper for him, and the cellar door was shut. He looked about, and tried to find some place under the door to creep through; but there was none. He felt so hungry that he could almost have eaten the cat, which kept walking back and forth in the coal cellar. But she was alive, and he couldn't very well eat her alive. Besides, she was old, and he had an idea she might be tough. So he merely said, politely, "How do you do, Mrs. Pussy?" She did not answer him.

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Nevertheless, something must be done; and brownies can do things that nobody else can do. At first, he thought he would change himself into a mouse, and gnaw a hole through the door. Then he suddenly remembered the cat. He had decided not to eat her, but he was quite certain that she would wish to eat him. So he thought it best to wait till she was fast asleep. But it was a long time before she decided to go to bed. At last, however, quite tired with walking about, Pussy turned around on her tail six times, curled down in a corner, and fell fast asleep.

Quickly Brownie changed himself into a very tiny mouse. He also took care not to make the least noise. Then he gnawed a hole in the door, and slipped through. When he was on the other side of the door, he turned himself into a brownie again.

The kitchen fire was not quite out. There was still enough light to show that the supper was even better than the one he had found the night before. In fact, there was enough food left for three brownies; but this one ate it all.

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In trying to cut a piece of beef he let the knife and the fork fall. They made such a great noise that the dog began to bark. It seemed as if she would arouse everybody in the house. But Brownie got her the puppy, which was in a basket in the corner of the room, and she became quiet again.

When Brownie had finished his supper, he again made tracks all over the white tablecloth. After that, he teased the puppy for an hour or two until the clock struck five. Then he thought it wise to turn into a mouse again and creep back into his cellar.

He was only just in time, though. For at the very minute when he slipped through the hole, the cat opened one eye and was about to pounce upon him. Before she could touch him, however, he changed himself back into a brownie right before her eyes. Muff was so scared that she ran away. Her tail grew into twice its usual size, and her eyes looked like balls of fire. But Brownie only said, "Ha, ha, ha!" and walked slowly into his hole.

When the cook came down stairs in the morn-

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ing, she saw that again the supper was all eaten. The tablecloth, too, was blacker than ever with the strange tracks. She was greatly puzzled. Who could have done it all? It was not the cat, which came mewing out of the coal cellar the minute the door was unlocked. Perhaps it was a rat. But then, would a rat have come so near the dog?

It must have been the dog, or her puppy, which just then came rolling out of its basket. "You little wretch," said the cook. "You and your mother did this. I'll teach you to keep off the table."

She quite forgot that Tiny had been safely tied up all night, and that her poor little puppy was so fat and helpless he could hardly stand on his legs. He surely could not jump on chairs and tables. But she gave them both such a beating that they ran howling out of the kitchen. The kind little kitchen maid soon found them in the yard and took them up in her arms.

"You ought to beat Brownie, if you could catch him," said the maid to the cook. "He

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will do it again and again, you'll see; for he can't bear an untidy kitchen. You'd better do as the poor old cook did, and wash the supper dishes and put the odds and ends safe in the cupboard. And if I were you," she added, "I would put a bowl of milk behind the coal cellar door."

"Nonsense!" answered the young cook, as she went away. But afterward she thought better of it, and did as the maid had said.

Next morning the milk was gone. Perhaps Brownie drank it. Anyhow, nobody could say that he didn't.

As for the supper, the cook put it on the shelves of the pantry and nobody touched it. As for the tablecloth, she folded it up and put it in the drawer of the sideboard. In the morning, it was as clean as ever, with not a single black footmark upon it. No mischief had been done, and the cat and the dog were not blamed.

And Brownie played no more tricks upon anybody—till the next time.

—Dinah M. Mulock.

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THE ELF AND THE DORMOUSE

Under a toadstool
  Crept a wee Elf,
Out of the rain
  To shelter himself.

Under the toadstool,
  Sound asleep,
Sat a big dormouse
  All in a heap.

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Trembled the wee Elf,
  Frightened, and yet
Fearing to fly away,
  Lest he get wet.

To the next shelter—
  Maybe a mile!
Sudden the wee Elf
  Smiled a wee smile;

Tugged till the toadstool
  Toppled in two.
Holding it over him,
  Gayly he flew.

Soon he was safe home,
  Dry as could be.
Soon woke the dormouse—
  "Good gracious me!

"Where is my toadstool?"
  Loud he lamented.
And this is how umbrellas
  First were invented.

—Oliver Herford.

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THE DOG AND THE DONKEY

A certain man had a dog and a donkey. He was very fond of the dog. He petted him, gave

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him fine food, and allowed him to sit on his lap.

The donkey worked all day for the man, and when his work was over, he was shut up in his stall with only straw to eat.

One day the donkey said to himself, "My master likes the dog. I wonder why he doesn't like me? The dog never does any work, but I work all day long. The dog has fine food to eat and I have only straw. My master always pets the dog, but he never says a kind word to me!"

The donkey felt very sad. At last he said, "I know why my master likes the dog. It is because the dog sits on his lap. I will sit on his lap and then he will like me."

Soon the donkey's master came into the garden and sat down on a bench. Then the donkey ran to him and sat on his lap.

"Help! help!" called the man. "The donkey is killing me! Take him away! I will not have him here!"

So the servants came and led the donkey away and beat him for what he had done.

—*From Reynard, the Fox.*

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THE PRICE OF THE COLT

The wolf and the fox were walking through a field when they saw a mother horse and her colt. The wolf was hungry, as usual, and begged the fox to go to the horse and ask her if she would sell her colt. So the fox went to ask her.

The horse told him that she would sell the colt for money.

"What is the price?" asked the fox.

"You will find the price written on my hind foot," replied the horse.

The fox knew what she meant; and being very sly, he said, "I do not wish to buy the colt; but the wolf sent me to ask the price of it."

"Let him come," said the horse, "and I am sure he will be satisfied."

Then the fox went to the wolf and told him what the horse had said.

"I could not buy the colt," said the fox, "because I could not read the price, which was written on the mother's hind foot."

The wolf was a great boaster. "Oh, I can read," he said. "I can read all kinds of writ-

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ing. I will go and see what the price is."

The wolf set out in fine spirits. When he came to the mother horse, he asked the price of the colt. The horse held up one hind foot so that he might read the writing that was on it.

As the wolf could not see very well, he came nearer. Then the mother horse struck him a terrible blow with her foot. The wolf rolled over and over and lay for a long time as if he were dead. At last he began to move and to howl like a dog.

So the fox came near to him and said, "Are you ill? Did you eat too much of the colt? Didn't you save a part of it for me? What was written on the mother's foot?"

"Do not be so cruel, Brother Fox," said the wolf. "The mother horse has an iron shoe. I thought the nails were letters, and when I tried to read them, she hit me with her foot. I am sure my poor head is broken."

"I now see that the old proverb is true," said the fox. "Those who read the best are not always the wisest men."

—*From Reynard, the Fox.*

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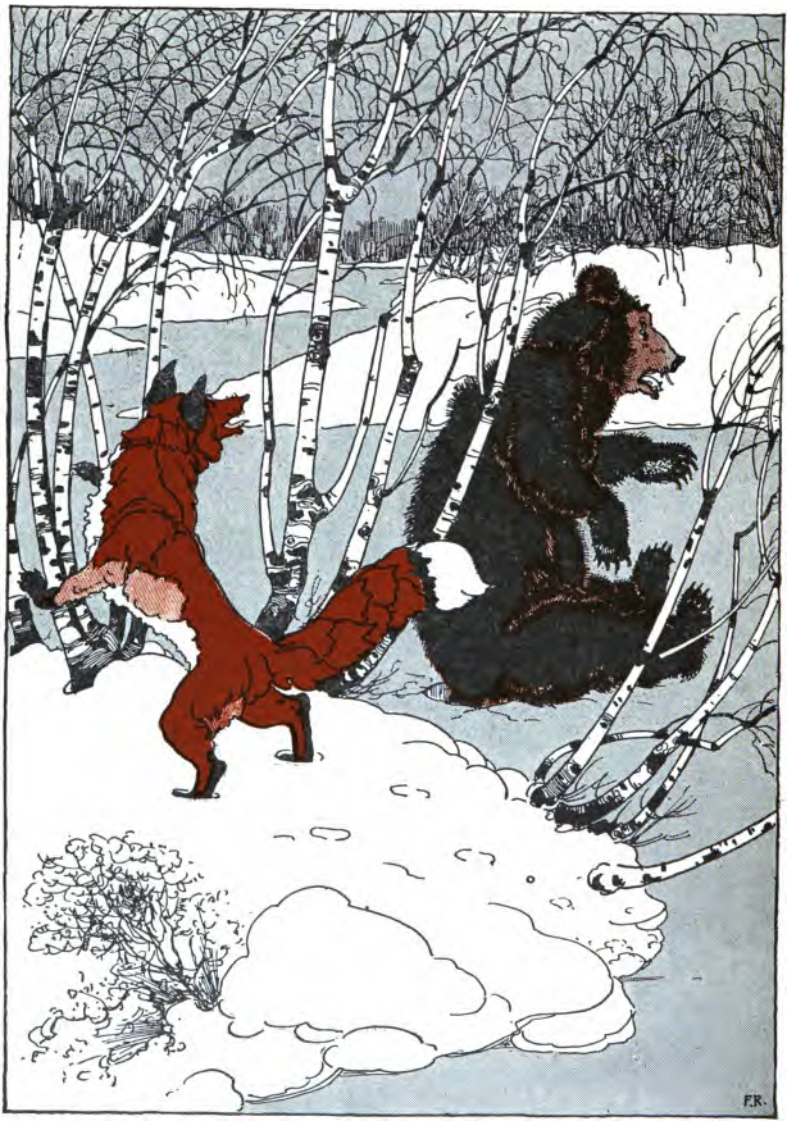

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WHY THE BEAR'S TAIL IS SHORT

In the winter the fox told Mother Bear that he would teach her to fish. As she was willing to learn, he led her to a hole in the ice, and told her to put her tail down into the water.

He told her, too, to keep it there for a long time. Then when she pulled her tail out of the water, she would find it covered with fish.

The bear was silly enough to believe all that the fox said; so she sat a long time, with her tail in the water, waiting for the fish. When at last she tried to pull her tail out of the water, she found to her dismay that it was frozen fast in the ice.

She called to Reynard to pull her out; but he laughed at her and ran away. Then she called to Father Bear, who came to help her.

But the men of the village also heard Mother Bear calling, and they came with clubs to kill her. Father Bear pulled and pulled, until at last he set her free. But Mother Bear left a part of her tail in the ice.

—*From Reynard, the Fox.*

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THE FOX IN THE WELL

There were two buckets in a well. They were held by a rope that passed over a wheel at the

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top of the well. When one bucket went up the other went down.

One day, the fox got into one of the buckets and fell to the bottom of the well. When he tried to get out, he splashed in the water and made a great noise. The wolf heard him and ran to see what was the matter.

"What are you doing down there, Brother Fox?" he asked.

"I am catching fish," said the fox. "Come down and help me."

"How can I come down?" asked the wolf.

"Jump into the bucket up there," said the fox, "and you will be here in a minute."

The wolf was foolish enough to obey the fox. He got into the bucket; and as he was much heavier than the fox, he at once fell to the bottom of the well, while the fox went up to the top. Then the fox jumped out of the bucket and ran away.

"Do not leave me down here," called the wolf.

But the fox only said, "That is the way of the world. When one goes up another goes down."

—*From Reynard, the Fox.*

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BROTHER FOX'S TAR BABY

One hot summer day, Brother Fox was going down to the river to fish when he met Brother Rabbit.

"Good morning, Brother Rabbit," said he. "Get your fish-pole and go fishing with me."

"What! go fishing this warm day?" replied Brother Rabbit. "Certainly not. I had rather sit here in the shade than fish in the hot sun."

"Let us get some of the branches of these trees and make a little house on the bank of the river," said Brother Fox. "Then we can sit in the shade and fish."

"It is too hot to build a house," replied Brother Rabbit. "Besides, I never eat fish."

"Very well, Brother Rabbit," said Brother Fox. "Then I shall build the house alone, and I shall be the only one who can fish in it." And Brother Fox went on his way to the river.

Brother Rabbit slept in the cool shade of the old oak all the afternoon while Brother Fox built his house to fish in.

The next day, Brother Rabbit did not see

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anything of Brother Fox, so he took his fish-pole and went to fish in Brother Fox's new house. He found it such a nice cool place that he decided to fish there every day.

Soon after Brother Rabbit had gone away, Brother Fox came to fish in his house, and he saw tracks on the floor.

"What is this?" he said to himself. "Who has been fishing in my house?"

When Brother Fox had looked very carefully at the tracks, he shouted angrily, "Well, I declare! Rabbit tracks! I will teach Brother Rabbit not to come fishing around my house! Just wait until I catch him!"

Brother Fox was so angry that he did not fish at all that day. He went back home again and tried to think of some way to catch Brother Rabbit. He thought and thought all the afternoon, but he could not think of a way to catch Brother Rabbit.

THE TAR BABY

Next morning, Brother Fox got up very early, for he had at last thought of a way to catch

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Brother Rabbit. He took an old rag doll and covered it with tar from head to foot. Then he set out for his fishing-house.

Brother Fox left the tar baby in the path, while he went on and hid in the house. Soon Brother Rabbit came along.

"Brother Fox isn't around," said he, "so I will go into his house and fish in the shade."

When Brother Rabbit came down the path, he saw the tar baby and called out, "Who are you?"

The tar baby did not answer, and Brother Rabbit grew very angry.

"Why don't you answer?" he shouted. "Have you no tongue in your old black head? Speak at once or I will hit you!"

Of course, the tar baby said nothing; so Brother Rabbit hit him with his right hand. But when he tried to draw his hand away again, he found that it was stuck fast to the tar baby.

"Let go! Let go!" he cried out. "If you don't let go, I will hit you again."

Bing! Brother Rabbit hit the tar baby with his left hand, and that also stuck fast.

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"Let me go! Let me go!" shouted Brother Rabbit. "If you don't let me go, I will kick you."

He kicked, as he said he would, and his foot stuck fast. Then Brother Rabbit raised his other foot and said, "Do you see this foot? If I kick you with this foot, you will think Brother Bear is knocking your head off."

Again Brother Rabbit kicked the tar baby, and then both hands and both feet were stuck fast.

"Let me go now, will you!" said Brother Rabbit. "If you don't, I will butt you with my head and send you clear to the bottom of the river."

Bing! Brother Rabbit butted the tar baby, and then his head stuck fast. Now he could hardly move.

At last, he knew how helpless he was, and was very much frightened. He did not threaten any longer, but only begged the tar baby to let him go.

"Good little black boy," he said, "please let me go. I was only playing with you. I didn't mean to hurt you."

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Just then, Brother Fox ran out of his house and saw Brother Rabbit. "Ha! ha! Brother Rabbit," he called out. "I have caught you this time. Now you will see what happens to people who break into my house."

"O, Brother Fox," said Brother Rabbit, "please let me go. I am your friend."

"You are a thief!" said Brother Fox; "and I don't want a thief for a friend. Just watch me build this big fire."

"What are you going to build a fire for, Brother Fox?" asked Brother Rabbit; and his voice trembled.

"Oh, I think I shall have roast rabbit for dinner," replied Brother Fox. "Roast rabbit is fine."

So Brother Fox gathered dry leaves and branches and piled them up near Brother Rabbit and set them on fire.

"Oh! I am burning!" screamed Brother Rabbit, as soon as the fire began to burn. "Let me go, Brother Fox. Let me go!"

Brother Fox did not say anything. He only went to get more wood for the fire. As the fire

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grew hotter, the tar baby began to melt, and soon Brother Rabbit had one of his hands free. In a little while his other hand was free also; but Brother Fox did not notice it.

"How is that for a fire?" asked Brother Fox, coming up with his arms full of wood.

"Fire!" said Brother Rabbit. "Do you call that a fire? You will have to make a bigger fire than that before you can roast me."

"Very well," said Brother Fox as he went away to get more wood. "You shall have all the fire you want."

Before he returned, however, the tar baby had melted and Brother Rabbit was free. He ran away so fast that Brother Fox could not catch him. When he was quite out of the reach of Brother Fox and felt very safe, he called out:

"Be sure to build a big fire, Brother Fox. I am so busy I cannot wait until dinner time. You will have to find another rabbit to roast this time. Good-by."

—*French Fairy Tale.*

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THE MOUSE AND THE FROG

A mouse and a frog were friends. The mouse lived in a nest in a field, and the frog lived in a pond.

One day, the frog went to visit the mouse. The mouse showed him her nice nest and the grain-field where she found her food.

"This is very good," said the frog; "but my house is much better. The water is fine."

"I do not like the water," said the mouse.

"Come to visit me to-morrow," said the frog. "You will soon learn to like the water."

"Thank you," said the mouse. "I will come to-morrow."

"Now I must be going," said the frog. "Good-by."

"Good-by," said the mouse.

The next day, the mouse went to visit the frog. When she saw the water, she was afraid, for she did not know how to swim. But the frog said that he would teach her. So he tied a string around the mouse's neck and fastened it to one of his own legs. Then he dragged her into the pond.

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"Take me out of the water! Take me out of the water!" cried the mouse, as she began to sink.

The frog only laughed at her fears; but soon the poor little mouse was drowned.

Just then a hawk flew by looking for something for dinner. When the frog saw the hawk, he was afraid and dove down under the water. But the string he had tied to his leg was so long that the mouse on the other end of the string floated on the surface.

So the hawk seized the mouse and flew away; and the frog was carried along at the end of the string.

"Let me go! Let me go!" he shouted. "It is the mouse you want."

"What is that?" said the hawk, as he turned his head.

When he saw the frog, he laughed. "Well, I am in luck!" he said. "Who ever caught a mouse and a frog at the same time? I shall have a fine dinner to-day."

And away he flew to his nest.

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A BOY'S SONG

Where the pools are bright and deep,
Where the gray trout lies asleep,
Up the river and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest;
There to trace the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow lies the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

But this I know, I love to play
Through the meadow, among the hay;
Up the water and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

—*James Hogg.*

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THE SHEPHERD LAD

In Bethlehem lived Jesse the shepherd with his eight sons. His flocks fed on the hillsides, and his sons watched them by day and shut them up in the fold at night.

The youngest of Jesse's sons was David. He helped his brothers to care for the sheep, and he also learned to play the harp and to sing. Indeed, he played and sang so well that he became known as "The Sweet Singer of Israel."

Once, King Saul, the king of Israel, became ill from care and worry. His servants, greatly troubled, sent for David, and desired him to play upon his harp so that the king might forget his sorrows and be well again.

So David took his harp and went with the king's servants. When they came to the king's tent, the servants left David and hurried back to their tasks.

David had never seen the king, who had shut himself up in his tent, and had driven away in anger all who dared to come near the place. A stouter heart than David's might have shrunk from lingering there. Doubtless he felt like run-

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ning away; but instead, he went up to the doorway of the tent and began to sing softly and to play upon his harp.

He sang of the fields and the birds and the flocks on the hillsides. He sang of the brooks and of the cool shade of the woods. He sang of King Saul himself and of his courage and glory. Hour after hour he sang, until at last the king spoke; but his voice was so low that David could not hear his words.

So he only replied, "I am David, thy servant."

Then Saul spoke more loudly. "I feel better, at last," he said. "I will now go to sleep."

Then David took his harp and stole softly away to tell the anxious servants that the king was asleep. After that, he went back to his home; and the king never knew who had sung away his trouble and care.

Day after day and week after week went by while David helped his brothers care for the sheep. At last, the Philistines made war on the people of Israel; and King Saul called upon the men of his kingdom to fight for their country.

Three of David's brothers joined the army;

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but David was left at home with the others to tend the sheep.

As time passed, Jesse grew anxious about his sons who were exposed to the dangers of war. One day he called David to him.

"My son," he said, "I am troubled about your brothers. I should like to know that they are safe and well. Take some food that they like and go to visit them to-morrow."

"Yes, father, I will do as you wish," said David. And he hurried away to the pasture.

All that day while he watched the sheep, David thought of the wonderful journey he should take on the morrow; and that night he could not sleep for thinking of it.

DAVID'S JOURNEY

Early the next morning, he was up and away to the camp of the army. With him went a servant, who led a donkey loaded with ears of corn and fresh loaves of bread for David's brothers, besides a present for the captain.

When David came near to the camp, he commanded the servant to wait by the roadside

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while he went to look for his brothers. But before he had gone many steps, he saw a most wonderful sight.

Right before him was a little valley, and drawn up for battle on opposite sides of the valley were the army of the Philistines and the army of Israel. While David was looking for his brothers, a giant named Goliath, who was more than nine feet tall, came out from the army of the Philistines, and called aloud to the men of Israel.

"You men of Israel are cowards," he shouted. "I dare you to send a man to fight against me. If you send a man who can kill me, then the Philistines will be your servants; but if I kill your man, you will be the servants of the Philistines."

The soldiers of Israel trembled when they heard the words of the giant. One of them spoke to David and said that the king had promised to give his daughter to be the wife of the man who should kill the giant.

Then David said, "Let no man fear, for I will now go and kill this giant."

So they told Saul what David had said, and

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Saul sent for David. When the lad came before him, Saul said, "You are not able to fight this giant. You are only a youth, and he has been a soldier for many years."

David replied, "I am not afraid. Once when I watched my father's sheep, a mountain lion came and took one of the lambs; but I ran after him and smote him with my staff. He let the lamb go and jumped at me; but I smote him again with my staff and killed him. At another time, a bear came and took one of the sheep, and I killed him also. Do you think my God, who saved me from the mouth of the lion and from the paws of the bear, will not be able to save me from the giant?"

Then Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you."

Saul put his own armor on David and gave him his own sword; but David refused them.

"I can not fight with these," he said, "for I have not been trained to use them."

So David took off the armor and gave back the king's sword. Then he went to the brook and chose five smooth stones, which he put in

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his shepherd's bag; and he took his sling in his hand and ran toward the giant.

When Goliath saw David coming, he was astonished and called out, "You men of Israel are cowards. You send a lad to fight a soldier!"

As David ran to meet the giant, he put his hand into his shepherd's bag and drew out a stone and slung it. His aim was so true that

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the stone hit the giant in the forehead and killed him.

When the Philistines saw that their leader was dead, they fled back to their own land.

Thus a shepherd lad saved his country from its enemies and so became the king's son-in-law; and many years afterwards he himself became king.

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THE LARKS IN THE WHEAT

A STORY TO PLAY

(*A mother lark builds her nest in a wheat field and soon has a fine family of young larks. One day, when the wheat is nearly ripe, the mother lark goes to look for food for her young ones. While she is away, the farmer and his son come to look at the wheat.*)

Farmer: My son, this wheat is almost ripe. Let us go and ask our neighbors to cut it for us to-morrow.

(*The farmer and his son go away. Soon the mother lark returns home.*)

Young Lark: O, mother, mother, what shall we do? What shall we do? While you were away the farmer came with his son to look at the wheat. He told his son that they would ask their neighbors to cut the wheat to-morrow. We cannot fly. What shall we do?

Mother Lark: Do not fear, my child. If the farmer waits for his neighbors to do his work for him, the wheat will not be cut to-morrow.

(*Next morning the mother lark goes to find food for her young ones, and again the farmer*

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and his son come to the wheat field.)

Farmer: This wheat is ripe. Our neighbors have not cut it for us, so I shall ask our cousins to cut it to-morrow.

(*The farmer and his son go away and the mother lark returns home.*)

Young Lark: O, mother, what shall we do? To-day the farmer came again with his son and said, "As our neighbors have not cut the wheat, I shall ask our cousins to cut it to-morrow."

Mother Lark: Do not fear, my child. If the farmer waits for his cousins to do his work for him, the wheat will not be cut to-morrow.

(*Next morning the mother lark goes away to find food for her young ones, and again the farmer and his son come to look at the wheat.*)

Farmer: My son, neither our neighbors nor our cousins have cut the wheat for us. We can wait no longer; we must cut it ourselves to-morrow.

(*The farmer and his son go away and the mother lark returns home.*)

Young Lark: O, mother, what shall we do? The farmer came to-day with his son and said,

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"Neither our neighbors nor our cousins have cut the wheat for us, so we must cut it ourselves to-morrow."

Mother Lark: Now it is time for us to go. When a man decides to do his work himself, you may be sure that it will be done. Try your wings, my children, and see if you can fly.

Young Larks: I can fly! I can fly! I can fly!

(*All the larks fly away.*)

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THE BROWN THRUSH

There s a merry brown thrush sitting up in a tree,
He's singing to you! He's singing to me!
And what does he say, little girl, little boy?
"Oh, the world's running over with joy!
Don't you hear? Don't you see?
Hush! Look! In my tree,
I'm as happy as happy can be!"

And the brown thrush keeps singing, "A nest do
you see,
And five eggs hid by me in the old elm tree?
Don't meddle! Don't touch! little girl, little boy,
Or the world will lose some of its joy.
Now I'm glad! Now I'm free!
And I always shall be,
If you never bring sorrow to me."

So the merry brown thrush sings away in the tree,
To you and to me, to you and to me,
And he sings all the day, little girl, little boy,
"Oh, the world's running over with joy!
But long it won't be,
Don't you know? Don't you see?
Unless we are as good as can be!"

—*Lucy Larcom.*

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THE SKYLARK'S SPURS

Many years ago, there was a fairy who had one very bad habit. She was fond of finding fault with other people.

One day, when she had been saying unkind things of some of her friends, her mother said, "If you knew a little more of the world, I think you would not find so many things to complain of. So I advise you to go on a long journey. You will find plenty of food, for the cowslips are now in blossom, and they contain excellent honey. I need not be anxious about your lodging; for there is nothing better to sleep in than an empty robin's nest."

The young fairy was anxious to travel, so she bade her mother good-by and set out. She flew over the country-side until she came to a large meadow with a clear river on one side of it and some tall oak-trees on the other. There, after her long flight, she sat down to rest beside a hedge. She was thinking of taking a nap when she heard a deep sigh. Peeping forth from her pleasant resting place among the hawthorn

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blossoms, she saw a fine young skylark sitting in the long grass.

"What is the matter?" asked the fairy.

"Oh, I am so unhappy," replied the poor skylark. "I want to build a nest, but I have no mate."

"Then, why don't you look for a mate?" asked the fairy, laughing at him. "Do you expect one to come and look for you? Fly up and sing a beautiful song in the sky, and then perhaps some pretty bird will hear you. If you tell her that you will help her to build a nest, and that you will sing to her all day long, it may be that she will be willing to be your mate."

"Oh, I don't like to fly up," said the lark. "I am so ugly. If I were a yellow-bird with black wings, or a robin with red feathers on my breast, I should not mind my faults. But I am only a poor, brown skylark, and I know that I shall never be able to find a mate."

"You cannot expect to have everything," said the fairy. "Besides, you can never tell what you can do until you try. Let me see you fly up."

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"Oh, but you don't know," said the lark, "that if I fly up, my feet will be seen; and no other bird has feet like mine. My claws are enough to frighten anyone; and yet I am not a fighting bird."

"Let me look at your claws," said the fairy.

So the lark lifted up one of his feet, which he had kept hidden in the long grass.

"Are you sure that you never use your claws to fight with?" asked the fairy.

"No, never," said the lark. "I have never fought in my life; but still these claws grow longer and longer. I am so ashamed of their being seen that I often lie here in the grass, instead of flying up toward the sky to sing as I should like to do."

"If I were you, I should pull them off," said the fairy.

"That is easier said than done," answered the poor skylark.

"Well, I am sorry for you," said the fairy. "At the same time, you must like to fight or you would not have such long spurs."

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"That is just what I am always afraid people will say," sighed the skylark.

"Nothing is given to us unless it is of some use," said the fairy. "You would not have wings unless you were to fly, or a voice unless you were to sing. Nor would you have those spurs unless you were to fight. If your spurs are not for fighting, what are they for?"

"I am sure I don't know," said the skylark, lifting up one foot and looking at it. "Then you are not willing to help me? I thought you might be willing to say to my friends that I do not like to quarrel."

"No, I cannot help you. Looks are much against you," answered the fairy. "It is quite plain that those spurs are meant to fight with. Good morning."

So the fairy flew up into an oak tree, and the skylark sat in the grass with his head bowed.

Soon, a grasshopper came chirping up to the skylark and tried to comfort him. "I heard all that the fairy said to you," said the grasshopper; "but I have known you for some time, and I have never seen you fight or look angry.

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I shall tell everyone that you are a very good-natured bird, and that you are looking for a mate. Nevertheless," he continued, "I should be glad if you could tell me what is the use of those claws. The question might be asked of me, and I should not know what to answer."

"Grasshopper," replied the skylark, "I can not tell what they are for. That is the truth."

"Well," said the grasshopper, "time will tell." Then he went away.

The skylark was happy because the grasshopper had paused to speak with him. He flew up into the air, and as he rose higher and higher, his song grew sweeter and louder.

The ants, who were carrying seeds to their houses, stopped to listen. The doves stopped cooing, and the little field-mice came and sat in the openings of their holes.

THE LITTLE BROWN LARK

A pretty brown lark, who had been sitting under some leaves, peeped out and said, "I never heard such a beautiful song in my life—no, never!"

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"It was sung by my friend, the skylark," said the grasshopper. "He is a very good-natured bird, and he wants a mate."

"Hush!" said the pretty brown lark. "I want to hear the end of that wonderful song." And she held her breath, for she did not want to lose a single note.

"Well done, my friend!" said the grasshopper, when the skylark came down again. Then he told him how pleased the brown lark had been with his song, and he asked the skylark to go to see her.

The skylark walked carefully, for he did not want the brown lark to see his feet. He thought that never before had he seen so pretty a bird.

When she told him how much she loved music, he darted up again into the blue sky as if he were not at all tired, and sang a song that was clearer and sweeter than the first. He was so glad that he could please her!

The grasshopper did not fail to praise his friend, and to tell what a cheerful, kind bird he was. So when the skylark asked the brown lark to overlook his spurs and be his mate,

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she said, "I will think about it, for I do not mind your spurs very much. I do not think I should like you to have short claws like other birds, although I cannot say why; for your spurs do not seem to be of any use."

This was good news to the skylark, and he sang such sweet songs that he soon won his mate.

THE NEST

Before long, they built a little nest in the grass. The skylark was so happy that he almost forgot to be sorry about his long spurs.

All this time, the fairy was flying about from field to field; and I am sorry to say that she seldom went anywhere without saying unkind things. When she met the skylark's friend, she said, "How do you do, Grasshopper?"

"Thank you, I am very well and very happy," said the grasshopper. "People are always so kind to me."

"How is your quarrelsome friend, the skylark?" asked the fairy.

"He is not quarrelsome," replied the grass-

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hopper. "I wish you would not say that he is."

"Oh, well, we need not quarrel about that," said the fairy, laughing. "The skylark does not wear those long spurs for nothing."

The grasshopper did not care to quarrel with the fairy, so he said, "I wish you would come and see the eggs that the pretty brown lark has in her nest. There are three beautiful spotted eggs."

Off they went together; but they were surprised to find the little lark trembling and weeping as she sat upon the nest.

"O, my pretty eggs!" said the lark as soon as she could speak. "I am so unhappy about them. They will certainly be found."

"What is the matter?" asked the grasshopper. "Perhaps we can help you."

"Dear Grasshopper," said the lark, "I have just heard the farmer and his son talking on the other side of the hedge. The farmer said that to-morrow morning he would begin to cut the grass in this meadow."

"That is a great pity," said the grasshopper. "What a sad thing it is that you laid your eggs on the ground!"

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"Larks always do," said the poor little brown bird. "I do not know how to make a nest like those in the hedge." Although they were sorry for her, neither the grasshopper nor the fairy could do anything to help the lark.

At last, her mate dropped down from the white cloud where he had been singing. He was frightened when he saw her so sorrowful, with the grasshopper and the fairy sitting beside her. He asked the cause of her sadness, and when she told him, he, too, was very sad. Presently, however, he lifted first one foot and then the other and looked at his long spurs.

"If I had only laid my eggs on the other side of the hedge," sighed the poor little brown lark, "they would be safe now."

"My dear," said the skylark, "do not be unhappy." As he said this, he hopped up to the nest and laid the claws of one foot upon the prettiest egg, and, strange to say, they exactly fitted it. Then he clasped it with his long spurs.

"Oh, my good mate!" cried the mother bird; "do you think that you can carry them away

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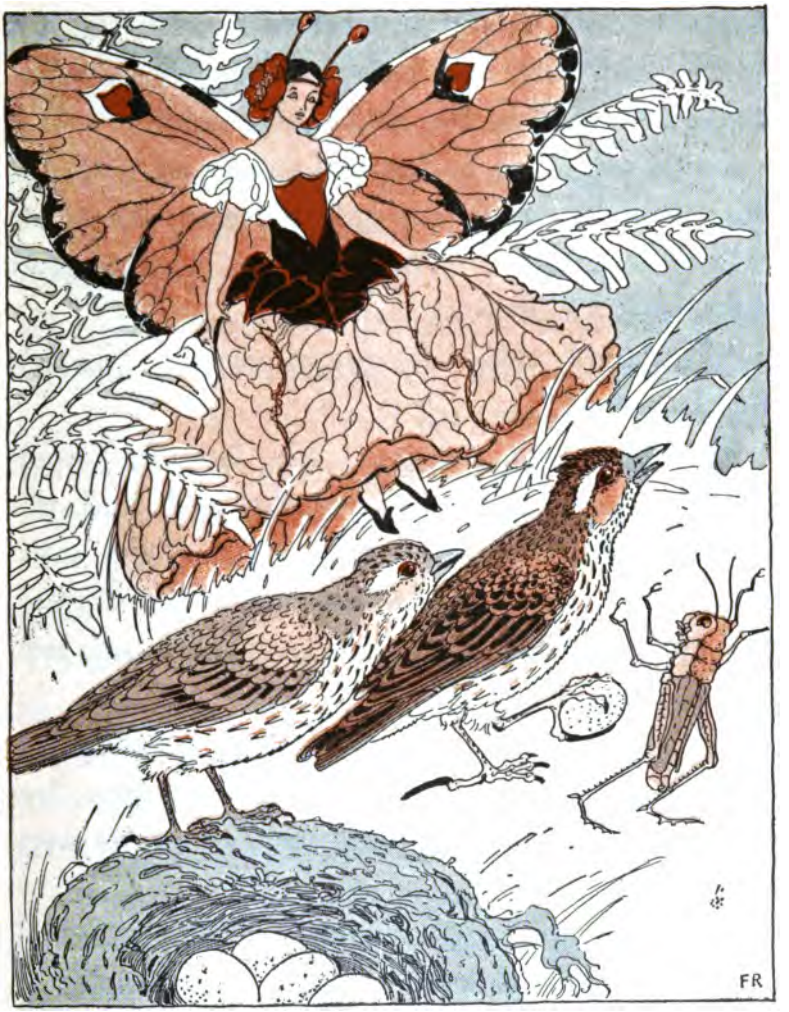

for me?"

"To be sure I can," replied the skylark, as he

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began to hop slowly and carefully with the egg in his right foot. "I have often wondered what my spurs could be for, and now I know."

As he said this, he hopped gently on with the egg, until he came to a safe place on the other side of the hedge. There he put it down and went back for another.

"Hurrah!" cried the grasshopper. "Lark's spurs forever!"

The fairy said nothing. She felt very much ashamed of herself, because she had told the skylark that his spurs were meant to fight with. She sat looking on in silence until the skylark had carried the last of the eggs to the other side of the hedge.

Then the skylark darted up into the sky again, singing to his mate. He was very happy, because at last he knew what his long spurs were for.

Then the fairy said to herself. "Well, I could not have believed such a thing. I thought he was a quarrelsome bird, because his spurs were so long. I see now that I was wrong, after all."

—Jean Ingelow.

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THE RAM AND THE PIG WHO WENT TO LIVE IN THE WOODS

A shepherd had a ram that was being fattened for killing. The ram had plenty to eat and soon became round and fat.

One day when the dairymaid came to give him some food, she said, "Ram, you must eat all you can. You will not have long to live now, for we intend to kill you to-morrow."

The ram was very much alarmed and said to himself, "Perhaps I can find some way to escape."

He went on eating, however, until his hunger was satisfied. Then he butted his horns against the door of his pen and burst it open. As soon as he was free, he went straight to a pigsty to visit a pig with which he was acquainted.

"Good day, and many thanks for your kindness the last time we met," said the ram to the pig.

"Good day, and many thanks to you," said the pig.

"Do you know why they make you so com-

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fortable and why they feed you so well?" asked the ram.

"No," said the pig.

"There are many mouths to be filled on this farm," said the ram; "so they are going to kill you and eat you."

"Are they?" asked the pig. "Much good may it do them!"

"If you wish, we will go into the woods and build a house and live by ourselves," said the ram. "There is nothing like having a home of your own."

"Yes, I am quite willing to go," said the pig. "It is fine to be in such good company."

When they had gone a short distance, they met a goose.

"Good day, and many thanks for your kindness the last time we met," said the goose.

"Good day, and many thanks to you," said the ram. "We were far too comfortable where we were, so we are going to the woods to make a home and live by ourselves. In your own house you can be your own master."

"I am very comfortable where I am," said the

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goose; "but why shouldn't I go with you? Good company makes the day shorter."

"What do you think you can do?" asked the pig. "Quacking can never build a hut or a house."

"Good advice and skill may do as much as a giant," said the goose. "I can pick moss and stuff it in the cracks to make the house warm."

"Well, you may as well come along with us," said the pig. "I should like to have the house warm and comfortable."

When the three companions had gone a little farther, they met a hare, who came scampering out of the woods.

"Good day, and many thanks for your kindness the last time we met," said she.

"Good day, and many thanks to you," said the ram. "We were far too comfortable where we were, so we are going to the woods to make a house and live by ourselves."

"Well, of course, I have a home in every bush," said the hare; "but in winter I have often said to myself that if I lived till summer, I should build me a house. So now I have a good mind

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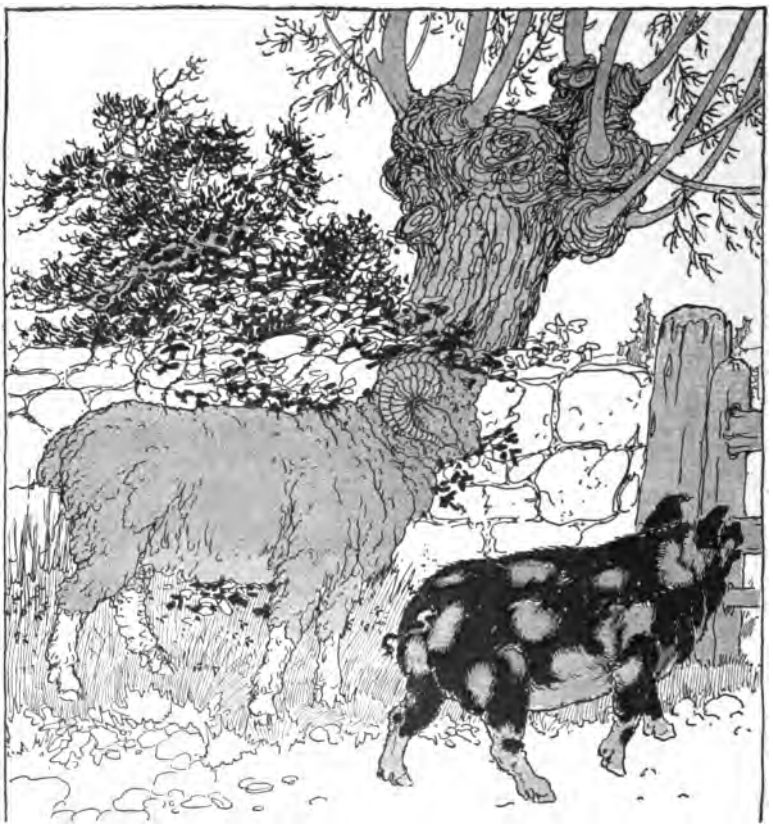

to go with you and build one after all."

"I am afraid you would not be able to help us much in building the house," said the pig; "but no doubt you would be able to fight the dogs away."

"There is always something for willing hands

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to do," said the hare. "I have teeth to gnaw pegs with and good paws to knock them into the walls; so I shall be a good carpenter."

"Well, then, come along and help build the house," said the pig.

When they had gone a little farther on their

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way, they met a cock.

"Good day, and many thanks for your kindness the last time we met," said he.

"Good day, and many thanks to you," said the ram. "We were far too comfortable at home, so we are going to the woods to make a house and live by ourselves."

"Well, I am comfortable enough where I am," said the cock; "but it is better to have your own roost than to sit on a strange perch and crow. So if I may join your fine company, I will go to the woods with you and help you build the house."

"It takes something besides crowing to build a house," said the pig.

"It is not well to live in a house where there is neither dog nor rooster," said the cock. "I rise early and crow early."

"Yes, early to rise makes one healthy and wealthy and wise," said the pig. And as he was a heavy sleeper, he added, "We shall be glad to have you go with us to crow in the morning."

So they all went off to the woods and built

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the house. The pig cut down the trees and the ram dragged them home. The hare was the carpenter and gnawed the pegs and hammered them into the walls and the roof. The goose picked moss and stuffed it into the cracks between the logs. The cock crowed in the morning so that no one overslept.

When the house was ready and the roof was covered with bark, they could at last live by themselves; so they were happy and contented.

"It is pleasant to travel both east and west," said the ram; "but home, after all, is the best."

Now, a little farther in the woods two wolves had their den. When they saw that a new house was being built near them, they wanted to know what kind of folk they were to have for neighbors. "For," they said, "it is better to live among good neighbors than to travel far and wide."

One of the wolves made it his business to call at the house and ask for a match to light his pipe. The moment he came inside the door, the ram rushed at him and butted him with his horns, so that the wolf fell in a heap on the fire on the hearth.

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The pig bit him, the goose pecked him, and the hare scampered about the room and frightened the wolf out of his wits. The rooster sat up on a rafter and crowed.

At last the wolf managed to crawl out of the house.

"Well, to know one's neighbors is a delight," said the wolf who was waiting outside. "I suppose you had a grand welcome since you stayed so long. But where is the match you went to get?"

"A nice lot of neighbors they are," said the wolf who had been inside. "No sooner had I entered the house than the shoemaker threw his last at me, and I fell on my head in the fire. Then two blacksmiths began to pick off my flesh with red-hot tongs. The hunter rushed about the room looking for his gun, but fortunately he could not find it. Up in the rafters sat some one who beat his arms and shouted, 'Hook him up! Hook him up!' If he had ever got hold of me, I should not have escaped alive."

—Peter C. Asbjornsen.

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A THANKSGIVING FABLE

It was a hungry pussy cat,
Upon Thanksgiving morn,
And she watched a thankful little mouse
That ate an ear of corn.

"If I ate that thankful little mouse,
How thankful he should be,
When he has made a meal himself
To make a meal for me!

"Then with his thanks for having fed,
And his thanks for feeding me,
With all *his* thankfulness inside,
How thankful I shall be!"

Thus mused the hungry pussy cat,
Upon Thanksgiving Day;
But the little mouse had overheard
And declined (with thanks) to stay.

—*Oliver Herford.*

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CHILD ROWLAND AND THE DARK TOWER

Rowland, his sister Ellen, and his two brothers were playing ball beside the church. To tease his playmates, Rowland threw the ball over the roof of the church. Ellen ran around to get it, but she never came back again.

After they had waited a long time for her return, the three brothers went around the church to look for her. But she was not there. They thought that she was hiding from them, so they searched for her beside the church and in the fields. They looked for her everywhere, but they could not find her. At last, they gave her up for lost and went home to tell their mother.

The next day, the oldest brother went to visit Merlin, a wise old man who knew everything.

"Can you tell me where I can find my sister Ellen?" the oldest brother asked of him.

"The fair Ellen," said Merlin, "must have been carried off by the fairies because she went around the church in the opposite way from the sun. The fairies are sure to catch anybody who

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does that."

"How can I find her and bring her back?" asked the oldest brother.

"She is in the dark tower of the King of Elfland," said Merlin. "None but the bravest knight can bring her back again."

The oldest brother said that he was not afraid, and begged Merlin to teach him how to find Ellen. So Merlin taught him. After he had repeated the directions over and over again until he knew them by heart, the oldest brother set out for Elfland.

Rowland, his mother, and the second brother waited a long, long time for the oldest brother to return; but he never came back again.

Then the second brother went to Merlin and asked him how he might find Ellen and his brother. So Merlin taught him as he had taught his older brother. And after he had repeated the directions over and over again, the second brother set out for Elfland.

Then there were only Rowland and his mother left to wait for his return. They waited many, many days; but he never came back again.

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At last Rowland asked to be allowed to go to find Ellen and his brothers. He was the youngest of the four children, and was always called Child Rowland. But his mother was afraid to have him go because he was so young. Besides, she had lost all of her other children, and did not wish to lose him, also. Rowland begged and begged, however, until at last she let him go. She gave him, too, his father's sword that never struck in vain. Then he hurried away to find Merlin.

When he came to the cave where Merlin lived, Child Rowland said, "Merlin, please tell me where I may find my sister Ellen and my brothers."

"Your sister Ellen and your brothers," said Merlin, "are in the dark tower of the King of Elfland. If you would bring them back again, you must remember two things. They seem easy, but they are very hard to remember."

"Tell me what these two things are," said Rowland, "and I shall not fail to do them."

"One is something to do," said Merlin, "and

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the other is something not to do."

"The thing to do is this: *After you enter Elfland, cut off the head of every person who speaks to you until you meet your sister Ellen.* The thing not to do is this: *Drink not a drop and eat not a bite while you are in Elfland.* No matter how hungry or thirsty you may be, you must not eat nor drink. If you do, you will never see the earth again."

Then Rowland thanked Merlin and hurried away to Elfland. After he had traveled for many days, he came to the groom who cared for the horses of the King of Elfland.

"Can you tell me," said Rowland, "where I can find the dark tower of the King of Elfland?"

"I can not tell you," said the groom; "but go on a little farther and you will meet the herdsman who tends the cattle of the king. Maybe he can tell you the way."

Then Rowland drew his sword that never struck in vain, and cut off the groom's head.

Soon he met the herdsman and asked the same question he had asked of the groom.

"I can not tell you," said the herdsman; "but

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go on a little farther and you will meet the woman who feeds the king's hens. Maybe she can tell you the way."

Then Rowland drew his sword that never struck in vain, and cut off the herdsman's head.

Again he went on until he met the woman who fed the king's hens. He asked her the same question he had asked of the others.

"Go on a little farther," said the woman. "Then you will come to a round green hill with circular paths around it. Go around the hill three times in the opposite way from the sun. Each time you go around, say,

"'Open, door! open, door!
And let me come in!'

The third time you say that, the door will open, so that you may go in."

Rowland thanked the woman for what she had told him. He was just ready to go on, when he remembered what Merlin had told him to do. So he drew his sword that never struck in vain, and cut off the woman's head.

Then Rowland went on, and on, until he came to the green hill with circular paths around it.

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THE GREEN HILL

He went around the hill three times in the opposite way from the sun. Each time he said,

"Open, door! open, door!
And let me come in!"

The third time he said this, the door opened. He went in, and the door shut itself behind him.

He found himself in a hall that led into a great room which was almost as large as the green hill itself. The sides and the roof were

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like those of a great stone church. Everywhere were ornaments of diamonds and other precious stones, and flowers made of silver and gold. In the center of the roof was a lamp made of one great pearl. It lighted the whole room as if the rays of the sun were shining there. At one end of the room was a couch made of gold and covered with velvet. And on the couch sat Ellen, combing her golden hair with a silver comb.

When she saw Rowland, she stood up. "God pity you, you unlucky child!" she said. "How could you be so foolish as to come for me? If you had a thousand lives to lose, you could not go back from here."

Rowland and Ellen kissed each other, and sat down side by side on the couch. He told her of all that had happened on his way to Elfland. She told him that their two brothers had come to the dark tower, and had been enchanted by the king. They were now locked up in one of the rooms.

Rowland was weary from his long journey. He forgot all about the warning Merlin had given him, and asked Ellen for something to

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eat and drink. Ellen began to cry, but she was under a spell and could not warn him. So she went to the pantry and brought him some bread and a golden bowl full of milk.

He was just going to raise the bowl to his lips, when he looked up at his sister. Then remembering why he had come so far to find her, he dashed the bowl to the floor, and said:

"Not a drop will I drink,
Not a bite will I eat,
Until Ellen is set free!"

Just at that moment, the King of Elfland rushed into the room. But Rowland drew his sword that never struck in vain, and gave the king such a blow that he fell to the floor and begged for his life. Rowland agreed to spare him if he would free Ellen and his brothers.

The king consented to do this. So Rowland and Ellen and the two older brothers returned home to their mother. And you may be sure that Ellen never went around the church again in the opposite way from the sun.

—Old English Fairy Tale.

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THE FAIRIES

Up the airy mountain,
  Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
  For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
  Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
  And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore
  Some make their home;
They live on crispy pancakes
  Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
  Of the black mountain-lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
  All night awake.

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High on the hilltop
The old King sits;
He is now so old and gray
He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
Columbkill he crosses,
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses;
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long—
When she came down again
Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back
Between the night and morrow;
They thought that she was fast asleep,
But she was dead with sorrow.

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They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lakes,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wakes.
By the craggy hillside,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn trees
For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
As dig one up in spite,
He shall find the thornies set
In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

—*William Allingham.*

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BLUNDER AND THE WISHING GATE

Blunder was going to the Wishing Gate to wish for a pair of ponies and a little coach like Tom Thumb's. Of course, you can have your wish if you once find the gate. But how are you to find it?

It is not a great gate with a sign at the top like this:

WISHING GATE

It is only an old stile in a meadow. There are plenty of old stiles in meadows; so how are you to tell which is the right one?

Blunder's fairy godmother knew, but she could not tell him. She could only tell him to follow the road and to ask the way of the first owl he should meet.

Blunder was a very careless little boy and did not often find anything; so his fairy godmother had to warn him. Over and over again she said to him, "Be sure you don't miss him. Be sure you don't miss him. Be sure you don't pass him by."

"No, indeed, I will not," said Blunder, as he started off.

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Soon he saw an owl in an oak tree and called out, "Good Mr. Owl, will you please show me the way to the Wishing Gate?"

"What is that?" asked the owl, awakening from his nap. "Have you brought me a frog?"

"Oh, no," said Blunder. "I did not know that you would like one. Can you tell me the way to the Wishing Gate?"

"Wishing Gate! Wishing Gate!" hooted the owl, for he was very angry at being disturbed. "How dare you wake me to ask such a foolish question? Follow your nose, sir. Follow your nose."

Then the owl fell asleep again.

Blunder knew as little as before. How could he follow his nose? His nose would turn to the right or to the left, whichever way his legs carried him. What was the use of asking the owl, if that was all she could say?

A chipmunk came down the path. When she saw Blunder, she stopped short with a little squeak.

"Good Mrs. Chipmunk, can you tell me the way to the Wishing Gate?" asked Blunder.

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"No, I can not," said the chipmunk. "I have to gather nuts and care for my family, so I have no time to visit anybody. But if you follow the brook, you will find an old water sprite under a stone. I am sure he can tell you the way."

Blunder followed the brook, but he did not see the stone or the water sprite. He was saying to himself, "I don't know where he is, I can't find him," when he saw a frog sitting on a wet stone.

"Mr. Frog," said he, "can you show me the way to the Wishing Gate?"

"I can not," said the frog; "but over there in the pine tree you will find an old crow. I am sure he can tell you, for he is a great traveler."

"I don't know where the pine tree is," said Blunder. "I am sure I could never find it."

However, he went on up the brook. He did not see the crow in the pine; but he was tired from walking, so he sat down to rest. Soon he heard tiny voices in angry conversation.

"Go away! Go away, I tell you! I have just

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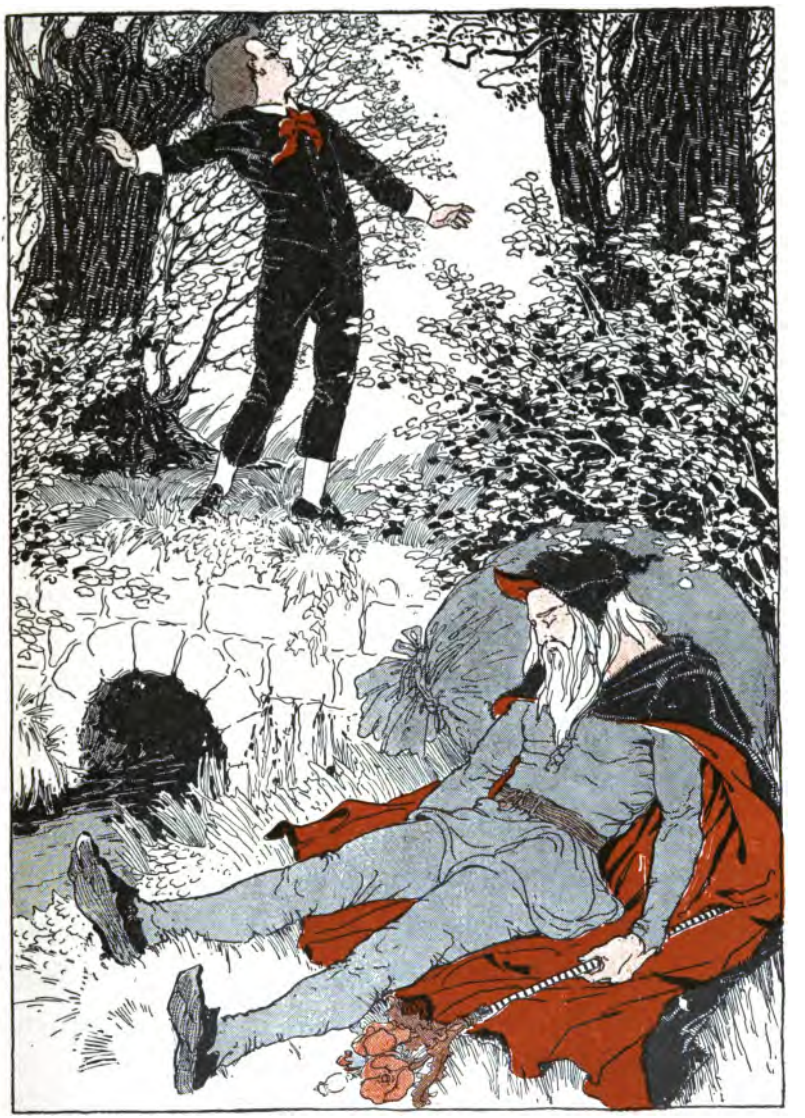

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heard knock! knock! knock! all day long. First came a wasp, then a bee, then another wasp, then another bee. Now you have come. Go away, I say. I will not let you come in."

"I want some honey and I will come in," said the other voice.

Blunder looked, and close beside him he saw a bee which was talking to a morning-glory elf that was curled up in a great red flower.

"Mr. Elf, can you tell me the way to the Wishing Gate?" asked Blunder.

"No, I can not," said the elf; "but if you will walk in this path, you will meet the dream-man. He has a bagful of dreams on his shoulder. If any one can tell you the way to the Wishing Gate, he can."

"How can I find him?" asked Blunder.

"I am sure I don't know," answered the elf, "unless you look for him."

Since there was no help for it, Blunder had to go on. He soon passed the dream-man, who was asleep under a hazel bush with his bag of good and bad dreams under his head.

Blunder had a habit of not using his eyes.

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At home when he was told to find anything, he would say, "I don't know where it is. I can't find it." Then his mother or sister would find it for him.

He passed the dream-man without seeing him and went on until he met Jack-o'-lantern.

"Can you show me the way to the Wishing Gate?" asked Blunder.

"With pleasure, sir," replied Jack, as he took up his lantern. "This is the way. Follow me."

Blunder kept close behind him; but in watching the lantern, he forgot to look at his feet, and he soon fell into a deep mud-hole.

"Wait a minute! The Wishing Gate is not down there," called out Jack, as he flew off among the tree-tops.

Blunder was a very angry little boy when he crept out of the hole.

"I don't know where the Wishing Gate is," said he, as he began to cry. "I shall go straight home and not look for it any more."

THE WOOD GOBLIN'S HOUSE

Just as he said that, he stepped upon an

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old moss-covered stump. It was the chimney of a wood goblin's house and it broke under his weight. Down, down he fell among the pots and the pans in which the cook was making the goblin's supper.

The old goblin was asleep upstairs; but the noise aroused him and he ran down to the kitchen to see what was the matter. The cook was afraid and tried to hide Blunder.

"Be quick!" said she. "If my master catches you, he will have you made into a pie in a minute. In the next room you will find a pair of magic shoes. Jump into them and they will take you up the chimney."

Blunder ran into the next room; but he could not find the shoes, for he was not in the habit of using his eyes.

"I can't find them! I can't find them!" sobbed Blunder as he ran back to the cook.

"Then run into the closet," said she.

"I don't know where it is! I don't know where it is!" said he, as he raced around the room.

"Jump into the meal chest!" called the cook. But Blunder couldn't find that either.

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"There is a cloak hanging on that peg," said she. "Wrap it around you."

By this time the goblin was half way down the stairs; but Blunder could no more see the cloak than he could find the shoes or the closet or the meal chest. Fortunately, he caught his foot in it and pulled it over him as he fell to the floor. There he lay hardly daring to breathe.

"What was all that noise about?" asked the goblin as he came into the kitchen.

"The pans fell down," said the cook.

The goblin could see nothing wrong, so he went grumbling upstairs again. Then the cook got the shoes for Blunder, and they took him up the chimney and set him down in the meadow.

He was safe enough now, but he was hungry; and it was dark and he did not know the way home. He saw an old stile, so he climbed up and sat on it, for he was too tired to stir.

THE SOUTH WIND

Just then, along came South Wind with his pockets full of showers. As he was going that way, he took Blunder home with him. Of course,

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he was very glad to go, but he would have liked it better if the south wind had not laughed all the way.

"What are you laughing at?" he asked at last.

"I saw two funny things in my travels," said the wind. "One was a hen that starved while she sat in front of a bushel of grain."

"And what was the other?" asked Blunder.

"The other was a little boy who sat on the top of the Wishing Gate and asked me to carry him home because he could not find it."

"What was that? What was that?" called Blunder, as the wind rushed on and left him at his own door. He entered the house and found his fairy godmother and all the rest of the family sitting about the fire.

"What luck? What luck?" cried everybody at once. "Where is the Wishing Gate?"

"I don't know where it is," replied Blunder. "I could not find it."

Then he told them all the troubles he had met in trying to find it.

"Poor little boy!" said his mother, kissing

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him; while his sister ran to get him some bread and milk.

"That sounds very fine," said his godmother. "Now hear my story. There was once a little boy who asked to go to the Wishing Gate. He did not know the way; but his fairy godmother showed him the road to start with, and told him to ask the way of the first owl he met.

"This little boy never used his eyes, so he passed the first owl and waked up the wrong one. He passed the water sprite and found only the frog. He sat down under the pine tree and never saw the crow.

"Then he passed the dream-man and ran after Jack-o'-lantern. He fell down the goblin's chimney and couldn't find the shoes or the closet or the meal chest or the cloak.

"He sat on top of the Wishing Gate and never knew it, until the south wind came along and brought him home. Surely such a stupid boy could never find anything."

—*Louise Chollet.*

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WISHING

Ring-ting! I wish I were a Primrose,
A bright yellow Primrose, blowing in the spring!
The stooping boughs above me,
The wandering bee to love me,
The fern and moss to creep across,
And the Elm tree for our King!

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Nay-stay! I wish I were an Elm tree,
A great, lofty Elm tree, with green leaves gay!
The winds would set them dancing,
The sun and moonshine glance in,
The birds would house among the boughs,
And sweetly sing.

Oh, no! I wish I were a Robin,
A Robin or a little Wren, everywhere to go;
Through forest, field, or garden,
And ask no leave or pardon,
Till winter comes with icy thumbs
To ruffle up our wings!

Well-tell! Where should I fly to,
Where go to sleep in the dark wood or dell?
Before a day was over,
Home comes the rover,
For mother's kiss—sweeter this
Than any other thing.

—William Allingham.

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CINDERELLA

Once upon a time, there was a man who had a good and beautiful daughter. Her mother was dead, and she and her father lived alone in a little house near a great city.

Before long the father married again. His new wife was a proud and cruel woman, who had two daughters of her own. They were as cross and ugly as her husband's daughter was kind and beautiful.

The new mother and her daughters disliked the new sister and treated her unkindly. She had to sweep the floors, wash the dishes, and tend the fires. Indeed, she spent so much of her time near the fireplace in the company of the pots, the kettles, and the cinders that her sisters called her Cinderella.

Her sisters had many fine clothes, but Cinderella had nothing to wear except the old worn-out dresses that her sisters gave her. And yet, she was far more beautiful in her faded and ragged dresses than they were in their new gowns of silk and satin.

One summer evening, the king's son had a

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grand ball to which all the rich men and women of the city were invited. Cinderella's mother and sisters were invited; but, of course, Cinderella had to stay at home to mind the kitchen fire. Besides, she had no fine dress or jewels to wear.

To make her lot still harder to bear, on the day before the party, Cinderella had to iron the fine linen that her sisters were to wear. She did not often complain, but she could not help wishing that she could go to the ball with her sisters.

On the evening of the party, Cinderella helped her sisters to dress and arrange their hair. They did not even thank her for helping them, and one of them tried to tease her by saying, "Cinderella, wouldn't you like to go to the party?"

"No, sister," said Cinderella. "You are only making fun of me. You know I have no clothes to wear to a party."

"You are right," said the sister. "People would only laugh to see a cinder-girl in such a place."

Cinderella was tender-hearted, and although

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her sisters treated her so unkindly, she would not do anything to injure them. She combed their hair as well as she could, and arranged their sashes and jewels in the most attractive way.

When the rest of the family set out for the ball, Cinderella wished them all a good time and then went back to weep in the chimney corner.

THE FAIRY GODMOTHER

While she sat there weeping, her fairy godmother came to her. "Why are you weeping, my little daughter?" she asked.

Cinderella had never before seen her fairy godmother, and she was greatly surprised; but she managed to say between her sobs, "Oh, I should so like to go to the ball! I should so like to go to the ball!"

"Well, I think we can arrange that," said the godmother. "Run into the garden and bring me the largest pumpkin you can find."

Cinderella did not ask any questions; she ran to the garden and brought the pumpkin. The godmother touched it with her wand and at once

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it became a dainty little coach, lined with soft yellow velvet.

"Now bring me the mouse-trap," said the godmother.

Cinderella hurried to get the trap. There were six little mice in it, and the godmother opened the door to let them out. As soon as she touched them with her wand, they became fine black horses with gilded harnesses.

In the rat-trap was a monster-rat; and he was changed into a tall coachman with shiny buttons on his coat.

Then the fairy godmother said: "Go into the garden and bring in the six lizards that are hiding behind the watering pot."

When Cinderella returned with the lizards, the godmother changed them into six footmen with bright red coats and shiny black hats. They stood up as straight on the back of the coach as if they had always been footmen.

"My fairy daughter," said her godmother, "now you can go to the ball."

"Oh, yes," replied Cinderella; "but must I go in these rags?"

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Then the godmother touched Cinderella with her fairy wand, and in a moment the ragged dress was changed into the finest silk with ornaments of gold and silver. There were also sparkling jewels in Cinderella's hair; but the most wonderful of all the things that she wore were tiny glass slippers that looked like diamonds.

Cinderella was delighted. She said, "Thank you! thank you!" so many times that at last her fairy godmother had to stop her.

"Hurry, my darling," she said. "It is late now, and you must leave for home before the clock strikes twelve. If you stay one minute after midnight, your coach will become a pumpkin, your horses will be mice, your coachman will be a rat, your footmen will be lizards, and your fine clothes will become rags."

Cinderella promised to obey her godmother. Then the footmen helped her into the coach and she was whirled away to the palace.

THE BALL

The king's son saw the coach coming and ran to meet the beautiful princess. When they en-

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tered the ball room, everybody said, "What a beautiful princess! I wonder who she is!" But nobody could tell.

All the ladies admired her and decided to have gowns made exactly like hers, if any dressmaker could find the pattern.

Cinderella danced with the king's son, and at supper he sat beside her. Indeed, he hardly left her side during the whole evening.

Once, she asked to be excused, and went and sat down beside her sisters. They did not know her and were surprised that such a great princess should notice them. She also gave them some of the fruit that the prince had given to her.

Soon the clock in the church tower began to strike. It said, "1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4." Cinderella knew it was a quarter before twelve; so taking leave of the king, the queen, and the prince, she hurried to her carriage and reached home before midnight.

Her fairy godmother was waiting for her in the kitchen. Cinderella told her all about the good time she had had and asked to be allowed to go to the ball the next evening. But her

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godmother did not stay to answer, for just then the two sisters rushed into the room.

They were greatly excited and both tried to talk at once. "O, Cinderella," they said, "the most wonderful princess that ever was seen came to the ball!"

"What was her name?" inquired Cinderella.

"Nobody knows," said one of the sisters; "and the king's son would give the whole world to know who she is."

Cinderella smiled. "Was she so very beautiful?" she asked. "How I should like to see her."

Then she begged one of her sisters to lend her the yellow dress that she wore on Sundays, so that she, too, might go to the ball the next evening to see the princess.

"What? Lend my dress to a cinder-girl?" said the sister. "Certainly not!"

The next evening, the two sisters again went to the ball. Cinderella also went, but not at the same time. She had the same coach, the same coachman, and the same footmen as before. And her clothes were even more wonderful

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than those she wore the previous evening, except that she wore the very same little glass slippers.

Everybody was delighted with her, and the prince would not leave her side for even a minute. The evening was soon gone, however, and before Cinderella was aware of it, the clock began to strike twelve.

THE GLASS SLIPPER

Without taking leave of anybody, she fled from the palace. In her flight, she lost one of her dainty slippers. It was found by the prince who offered a reward to anyone who could find the princess.

Soon the sisters came home and told how the ball had ended when the princess ran away.

The next day, and for several days, the prince sent messengers to call out in the streets:

"The king's son will marry the maiden whose foot fits the little glass slipper!"

Every fine princess of the king's court, and many a humble maid as well, tried to force her foot into the slipper; but the slipper was

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too small for any of them. At last, when no more maidens came to try on the slipper, the prince sent messengers into the homes of the city to seek the lost princess.

Since her sisters were unable to wear the slipper, Cinderella asked to be allowed to try. Her sisters laughed at her; but the messenger said that every maiden who wished should be permitted to try on the slipper.

Of course, the slipper exactly fitted Cinderella's dainty little foot. Then she took the mate from her pocket and put it on the other foot. At once, the fairy godmother appeared and touched Cinderella with her wand, and her ragged dress was changed to the beautiful gown that she had worn to the ball.

The sisters were astonished. They threw themselves at Cinderella's feet and begged her pardon for their unkind treatment of her. Of course, she fully forgave them; for she was always kind and gentle.

In a few days, Cinderella and the prince were married, and lived happily ever after

—*English Fairy Tale.*

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THE PRINCESS AND THE SUNBEAM

A charming little princess was very, very ill. She had been ill for so many weeks that the roses had left her pretty cheeks, her bright blue eyes had become heavy, and she was altogether a very drooping little flower.

The king, the queen, and the courtiers were very sad and anxious, because they all dearly loved the little princess. The king, in fact, would have given his crown and his kingdom to make her well again; but I am glad to say that he did not have to do so. The court physician managed it. It was a great deal of trouble, but he pulled her through, as the saying is, and the king made him a lord; which has nothing whatever to do with the story.

Well, the little princess lay in bed getting better. She was much too weak to move yet; but her bed was pulled near to the window and she was propped up with pillows so that she might look out. Directly under her window was a lovely garden filled with the most beautiful flowers and trees. At the end of the garden was a high wall, and beyond the wall the princess

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could see the upper part of a row of humble dwelling-houses.

She was very much interested in these houses, or rather, I should say, in a particular window of one of the houses; for at that window there was another little girl, about the same age as the princess, and she also was ill. Her bed, too, had been pulled near to the window, and she also had been propped up with pillows so that she might look out. The two children gazed at one another the live-long day, and each wondered what the other thought about and did.

After a time, they began to wave their hands to each other—the princess and the poor girl —and so a strange friendship sprang up between them.

But one day, the little girl in the humble dwelling did not appear at her window; and when she was still missing on the following day, the princess became anxious. She must know what had happened to her little friend. She had told no one of her new acquaintance, so whom was she to ask?

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"I really must know," she said, aloud. The sun shone suddenly into the room, and to her surprise she received an answer.

"What must you know, princess?" said a pleasant voice.

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The princess was greatly surprised to hear the voice, but she soon discovered that it was the sunbeam resting on her bed that was talking to her.

"Oh, Sunbeam, I am so glad you spoke," cried the princess. "I want to know about the little girl who lives in that house yonder. She used to come to the window every day and wave her hand to me; and now that she has not been there for two days, I am afraid she is worse."

"Well, princess," said the sunbeam, playing with the girl's golden hair and kissing back the roses into the pale cheeks, "I happen to know about that poor child. I have never seen her myself; but my friend the swallow looks in at the window often, and he told me about her. The swallow and I are great friends."

"Well, Sunbeam, go on," said the princess.

"She is worse, princess," replied the sunbeam, "much worse. She has been ill for a long time; but now she cannot sit up in bed."

"Oh, dear me how very terrible!" said the

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princess. "But, Sunbeam, she must be made better—*must* be made better! Tell me what will do her good."

"The fact is, I am the person to do her good. She wants me," said the yellow sunbeam.

"Then why don't you go to her?" asked the princess, a little crossly. "And that reminds me, you said you had never seen her. How is that?"

"Well, to tell you the truth, I can't get there," replied the sunbeam.

"Can't get there?" repeated the princess.

"No, I have tried hard," went on the sunbeam; "but there is always something in the way. Like most things in the world, I can not do everything I like."

"I must look into this," remarked the princess, sternly. "I will speak to my father, the king, about it."

That, in the eyes of the princess, settled the matter. The sunbeam would have to find its way to the poor girl's window. So there!

Shortly after this the sunbeam left, for the evening made its appearance. The princess then

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sent for the king—for allow me to tell you that, although the king ruled over a great country and a great people, his little girl ruled over him.

Then she told him the story of her sick friend, and insisted that he should compel the sunbeam to shine on her; and the king promised that it should be done. He would see the sunbeam himself about it in the morning; and so he did. He saw the sunbeam in the morning, but it had no effect. The sunbeam could not shine in at that little window.

The king was annoyed at this. He called for all the magicians in the land, and asked the question: "*How was the sun to shine on that little girl?*"

The magicians pulled their hair, and pulled their beards, and stayed up all night; but for all that they could not answer the question.

So the poor little girl grew worse, and the princess became ill again through fretting, and the king turned into a very angry king indeed. In fact, the court and the courtiers were quite beside themselves, which is a state of things not to be desired.

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Then the king offered a great prize for an answer to the question; and, lo and behold, some one discovered an answer! There came to the palace a little child of ten. He was brought before the king and he said:

"The way for the sun to shine on my little sister, O King, is for her to be carried to a room that has windows on the south side. Where she is now the sun can never touch her."

Then the king sprang to his feet, and clasped the boy by the hand, and made him an earl on the spot.

So the poor girl was taken to a house that had windows on the south side, where the sun was always shining. Then the sunbeam kissed her cheeks, as it kissed the cheeks of the princess, and health and strength came back to both of them. In a little time, the girl who had lived in the house beyond the garden wall became a lady-in-waiting at the king's court, and all were merry and happy.

So let us remember the blessings of God's sunshine.

—*Edric Vredenburg.*

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A CHILD'S PRAYER

God make my life a little light,
Within the world to glow—
A tiny flame that burneth bright,
Wherever I may go.

God make my life a little flower,
That bringeth joy to all,
Content to bloom in native bower,
Although its place be small.

God make my life a little song,
That comforteth the sad,
That helpeth others to be strong,
And makes the singer glad.

God make my life a little staff,
Whereon the weak may rest,
That so what health and strength I have
May serve my neighbors best.

—*M. Bentham Edwards.*

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EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON

A poor farmer had many children, but he had little food and few clothes to give them.

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They were all beautiful children, but the youngest daughter, who was named Elsa, was the most beautiful of all.

One stormy winter night, the family was seated about the fire. Presently, some one tapped three times on the window pane.

The father looked out of the window; but as the night was very dark he could see no one; so he opened the door. There before him stood a big white bear.

"Good evening!" said the white bear.

"The same to you!" said the man.

"If you will give me your youngest daughter, I will make you rich," said the white bear.

"I will not give her to you," said the man.

Then he went into the house and shut the door.

"Think it over," shouted the white bear. "I shall come back again next week."

The white bear went away; but the next day, and the day after, and every day Elsa begged her father to let her go with the bear. She loved her home, and she did not like to leave her parents and her brothers and sisters; but

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she knew that they were hungry and in need of clothes. So she was willing to go away for their sake.

The next week, therefore, when the white bear came again to ask for the youngest daughter, her father said that she might go. Elsa bade good-by to all the family, and went. Just outside the house the bear was waiting for her.

"Get on my back," said he, "and I will carry you."

Elsa climbed up and sat on his soft fur.

When they had gone a short distance, the white bear said, "Are you afraid?"

"No," replied Elsa.

"There is nothing to be afraid of," said he. "Hold tightly to my fur so that you will not fall off."

THE BEAR'S CASTLE

When they had traveled for a long time, they came to a great hill with a door in the side of it. The bear rapped at the door and at once it was opened for him. Then he went into the hill and Elsa jumped down from his back.

The inside of the hill was like a great castle.

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The rooms were bright with the light of many golden lamps. The furniture was costly; soft rugs covered the floor; and in the hall stood a table covered with good things to eat.

"This is your supper," said the white bear to Elsa. "Here is a bell. If you want anything, ring the bell and you will have it at once."

Then he went away.

When Elsa had finished her supper, it was late and she was sleepy. So she rang the bell and immediately she was in a beautiful sleeping room. The bed was made of gold, and the covers and the pillows were of the finest silk.

When she had put out the light and gone to bed, some one came into the room and sat on a chair until morning. This made her afraid, and she did not sleep well. But in the morning no one was there.

The same thing happened night after night. All day long the white bear roamed about the castle and talked to Elsa, but when night came he went away. Then, when Elsa went to bed, some one came and sat on the chair in her room.

She did not sleep at night and she was lonely

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in the daytime. At last, she looked so sad that the white bear asked her the cause of her grief.

"It is very lonely here," said she. "I should like to visit my parents and my brothers and sisters."

"You may visit them if you like," said the white bear. "But you must promise me not to talk to your mother when you are alone with her. She will take you by the hand to lead you into a room where she can speak to you alone; but you must not go with her. If you do, you will make both of us very unhappy."

The next day, the white bear told Elsa that they were going to visit her parents. She sat on the bear's back, and away they went at a terrible rate. At last, they came to a large white farm house. Here the bear stopped.

"This is where your parents are living now," he said. "Now mind you do not forget what I told you. If you do, you will bring misfortune upon us."

"Do not be afraid. I shall not forget," replied Elsa.

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Then she went into the house, and the white bear went away.

Elsa's parents and brothers and sisters were very glad to see her again. They said they did not know how to thank her enough for what she had done for them. They lived in a fine house now and had everything they wished.

Then they asked her about herself. She told them that she was very comfortable and that she had everything she needed; but she did not tell them where she had been, or why she did not sleep at night.

One day after dinner her mother took her by the hand and said that she wished to speak to her alone. Elsa did not wish to go; but her mother urged her, and at last she went.

Then Elsa told her mother all that had happened—that some one had come into her room every night as soon as she put out the light; but that she had never seen him because he had always gone away before morning.

"Oh, dear me!" said her mother. "It may be a troll for all we know. I will tell you how you can find out. Hide this candle in your dress

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and take it home with you. When he comes to your room again, wait until he is asleep. Then light the candle; but be sure the tallow does not drip on him."

Elsa promised to do as her mother had told her; and at night the white bear came and carried her away.

THE CANDLE

When night came and Elsa had gone to bed, some one came as usual and sat on the chair in her room. She waited until he was asleep and then she lighted the candle.

There on the chair was the loveliest prince she had ever seen. As she leaned over to see him better, three drops of tallow fell on his coat, and he awoke.

"What have you done?" said he. "You have made both of us unhappy for ever. If you had been faithful for a year, I should have been saved from an ugly witch who changes me into a white bear every day. Now I must go back to the Castle East of the Sun and West of the Moon and marry a princess with a nose as long as my arm."

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Elsa began to cry, but that did no good. The prince said he must leave her.

"May I go with you?" asked Elsa.

"No, you may not," said the prince.

"Where are you going?" asked she.

"It is east of the sun and west of the moon," replied the prince; "but you can not find the way."

When Elsa awoke the next morning both the prince and the castle were gone. She was lying on the green grass in a great field, and she was dressed in the same old clothes she had worn when she first went away from home. She cried until her eyes were red; then she got up and went to find the prince. After she had walked for many days, she met an old woman who was playing with a golden apple.

"Can you tell me the way to the Castle East of the Sun and West of the Moon?" asked Elsa.

"No, I can not," said the woman. "But I will lend you my horse, and you can ride to my neighbor. Perhaps she can tell you. When you come to her, tell my horse to go home again. You had better take this golden apple with you."

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Elsa rode the horse until she met an old woman who was carding wool with a golden comb. "Can you tell me the way to the Castle East of the Sun and West of the Moon," she asked again.

"I do not know the way," said the woman. "But you can ride on my horse until you come to my neighbor. Maybe she can tell you. You had better take this golden comb with you."

So Elsa rode the horse until she met an old woman who was spinning with a golden spinning wheel. She asked her, too, if she knew the way to the Castle East of the Sun and West of the Moon.

"No, I do not know the way," said the woman. "But I will lend you my horse and you can ride to the east wind and ask him. Perhaps he knows the way. He blows almost everywhere. I will give you my golden spinning wheel to take with you."

Then Elsa rode for many days until she came to the east wind. "Do you know the way to the Castle East of the Sun and West of the Moon?" she asked him.

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"I have heard of it," said he; "but I have never blown as far as that. If you like, I will go with you to my brother, the west wind. Perhaps he can take you there. He is much stronger than I am. Sit on my back and I will take you to him."

When they came to the west wind, the east wind said, "Brother West Wind, can you tell Elsa the way to the Castle East of the Sun and West of the Moon?"

"No, I can not," said the west wind; "but I will take her to the south wind. Maybe he can tell her the way."

The west wind and Elsa went along at a terrible rate. When they came to the south wind, the west wind said, "Brother, can you tell me the way to the Castle East of the Sun and West of the Moon?"

"I have been in many a nook and corner," said the south wind, "but I have never been there. If the maiden wishes, I will go with her to my brother, the north wind. He is the oldest and the strongest of all of us. If he does not know where the castle is, no one will

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ever be able to tell you. Sit on my back, fair maid, and I will carry you to him."

So the south wind carried Elsa to the north wind. The north wind was very wild and fierce, and when they were still a long way off, he called out, "Who are you? Where are you going? What do you want?"

"Oh, you needn't be so fierce," said the south wind. "It is only your brother and a poor lass who wants to find the Castle East of the Sun and West of the Moon."

"I know where it is," said the north wind. "I once blew an aspen leaf there; but I was so tired that I was not able to blow for many days afterwards. However, if the lass wishes to go there, I will see if I can blow her so far."

Elsa thanked the north wind and climbed upon his back, and away they went. As they went along, great storms rushed over the land and the sea. Houses and trees were blown down and ships were carried beneath the waves.

The north wind became more and more weary. At last, he could hardly fly; he had just strength enough to set Elsa down on the seashore a short

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distance from the castle. Indeed, he was so tired that he had to rest for many days before he could fly home again.

THE CASTLE

Next morning, Elsa sat under the window of the castle and began to play with the golden

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apple. Soon the princess with the long nose opened the window.

"For how much will you sell your golden apple?" she asked.

"You may have it, if I may sit in the room where the prince sleeps to-night," replied Elsa.

"Very well," said the princess.

So Elsa went to the prince's room after he had gone to sleep. She tried to speak to him; but he slept so soundly she could not wake him.

The next day she again sat under the castle window and began to play with her golden comb. Soon the princess with the long nose again opened the window.

"For how much will you sell your golden comb?" she asked.

"You may have it," replied Elsa, "if I may sit in the room where the prince sleeps to-night."

"Very well," said the princess.

So Elsa again went to the prince's room after he had gone to sleep. She tried to speak to him; but he slept so soundly that she could not wake him.

The next day Elsa sat once more under the

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palace window and began to spin on her golden spinning wheel. And once more the princess with the long nose opened the window.

"For how much will you sell your golden spinning wheel?" she asked.

"You may have it," replied Elsa, "if I may sit in the room where the prince sleeps to-night."

"Very well," said the princess.

But that day some poor prisoners, who had been locked in the next room, told the prince that on the last night and the night before a young girl had come to his room and had tried to waken him.

When night came, therefore, the prince pretended to go to sleep; but he was wide awake. Soon the princess with the long nose brought Elsa to the room and left her there. The prince spoke to her, and she told him all she had done to find him.

"It is lucky you have come," said the prince; "for to-morrow I was to marry the princess with the long nose. In the morning I shall ask her to wash off the three drops of tallow that you dropped on my clothes. Then I shall

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ask the trolls who are here to try to wash them off. They will not be able to do it, for it can be done only by human hands. At last, I shall ask you to wash out the spots. So, good night. Do not fail to come back in the morning."

The next morning, the prince said, "I must ask my bride to wash these three spots off my clothes." Then the princess with the long nose tried to wash out the spots; but they only became blacker than ever. Then the trolls tried; but they could not wash off the spots. Then Elsa tried; and the prince's clothes became as white as snow.

The old witch who had changed the prince into a bear, was so angry that she burst. I think the princess with the long nose must have burst, too; and the trolls must have burst, for I never heard of them afterwards.

Then the prince set free all the folks whom the witch had locked up in the castle. The next day, he married Elsa, and ever since that time they have lived in the Castle East of the Sun and West of the Moon.

—Peter C. Asbjornsen.

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THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SQUIRREL

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel,
And the former called the latter "little prig";
Bun replied,
"You are doubtless very big,
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together
To make up a year,
And a sphere,
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.

If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track.
Talents differ, all is well and wisely put.
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut."

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

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HOW THE BRAMBLE BUSH BECAME KING

Once upon a time the trees set out to find some one to be their king.

They went to the olive tree, and said, "Olive tree, come and be our king."

But the olive tree said, "Why should I go to be your king? My Maker sent me here to bear my olives. I can not leave my task to be your king."

Then the trees went to the palm tree, and said, "Palm tree, come and be our king."

But the palm tree said, "Why should I go to be your king? My Maker sent me here to bear my dates. I can not leave my task to be your king."

Then the trees went to the apple tree, and said, "Apple tree, come and be our king."

But the apple tree said, "Why should I go to be your king? My Maker sent me here to bear my apples. I can not leave my task to be your king."

Then the trees went to the vine, and said, "Vine, come and be our king."

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But the vine said, "Why should I go to be your king? My Maker sent me here to bear my grapes. I can not leave my task to be your king."

Then the trees went to the bramble bush, and said, "Bramble bush, come and be our king."

And the bramble bush said, "I bear no fruit. I have no task to leave. So I may as well be your king."

Then the trees made the bramble bush their king.

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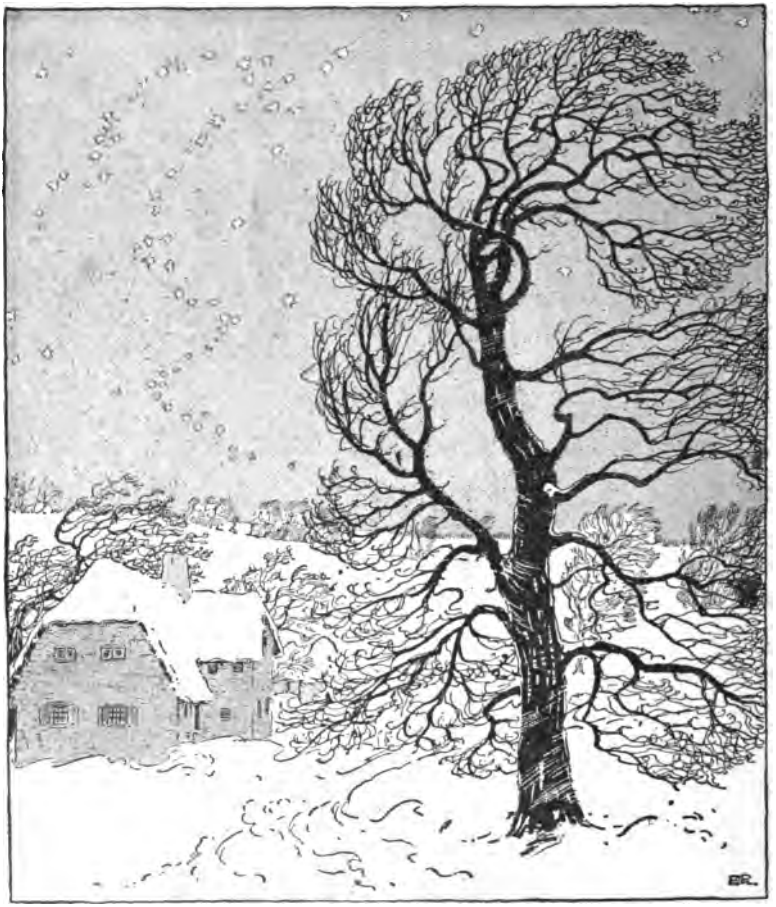

WINTER NIGHT

Blow, wind, blow!
Drift the flying snow!
Send it twirling, whirling overhead!

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There's a bedroom in a tree
Where, snug as snug can be,
The squirrel nests in his cozy bed.

Shriek, wind, shriek!
Make the branches creak!
Battle with the boughs till break o' day!
In a snow cave, warm and tight,
Through the icy winter night
The rabbit sleeps the peaceful hours away.

Call, wind, call!
In entry and in hall!
Straight from off the mountain, white and wild!
Soft purrs the pussy-cat
On her little fluffy mat,
And beside her nestles close her furry child.

Scold, wind, scold!
So bitter and so bold!
Shake the windows with your tap, tap, tap!
With half-shut, dreamy eyes
The drowsy baby lies
Cuddled closely in his mother's lap.

—*Mary F. Butts.*

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THE BOASTING BAMBOO

In far-away Japan there is a high mountain called Mount Fujiyama. On its sides are great forests, and in one of these forests there were once two bamboos that grew side by side.

One of them was tall and sturdy and held its head high above all the other trees in the forest. No wind that blew in summer or in winter was able to make the great tree bow before it; and this made it very proud and haughty.

Close beside the great tree grew another bamboo that was very different from its proud companion. It was small and slender, and swayed with every wind that blew. The sad thing about it was that it did not like to be small and weak. It wished to be big and strong like the other tree.

On warm summer days children often came to the forest to play. They never once played under the great bamboo, but always chose the pleasant shade of the little tree.

"This is our tree," said the children. "It's name is Fairy Queen."

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They made garlands of flowers and hung them on the lower branches of the tree. All day long they played there, while the birds sat in the swaying branches overhead and sang to them; but when the shadows began to lengthen, they hurried back to their homes.

One evening after the children had gone away, the great bamboo said, "Little bamboo, you are only good for the children to play with. I am big and strong. Some day I shall be the mast of a great ship. Then I shall sail far over the ocean and see all the cities of the world. You are good for nothing. You will never be big like me. When I am far away on the great sea, I shall think of you and pity you."

The little bamboo thought this was all very kind of the great bamboo; but her heart was so sad she could not speak. She only rustled her leaves and hung her head in shame.

One day, wood-cutters came to the forest with their saws and axes.

"Yonder bamboo will make a fine mast for a junk," said one of them, as he pointed to the great tree. "Let us cut that first."

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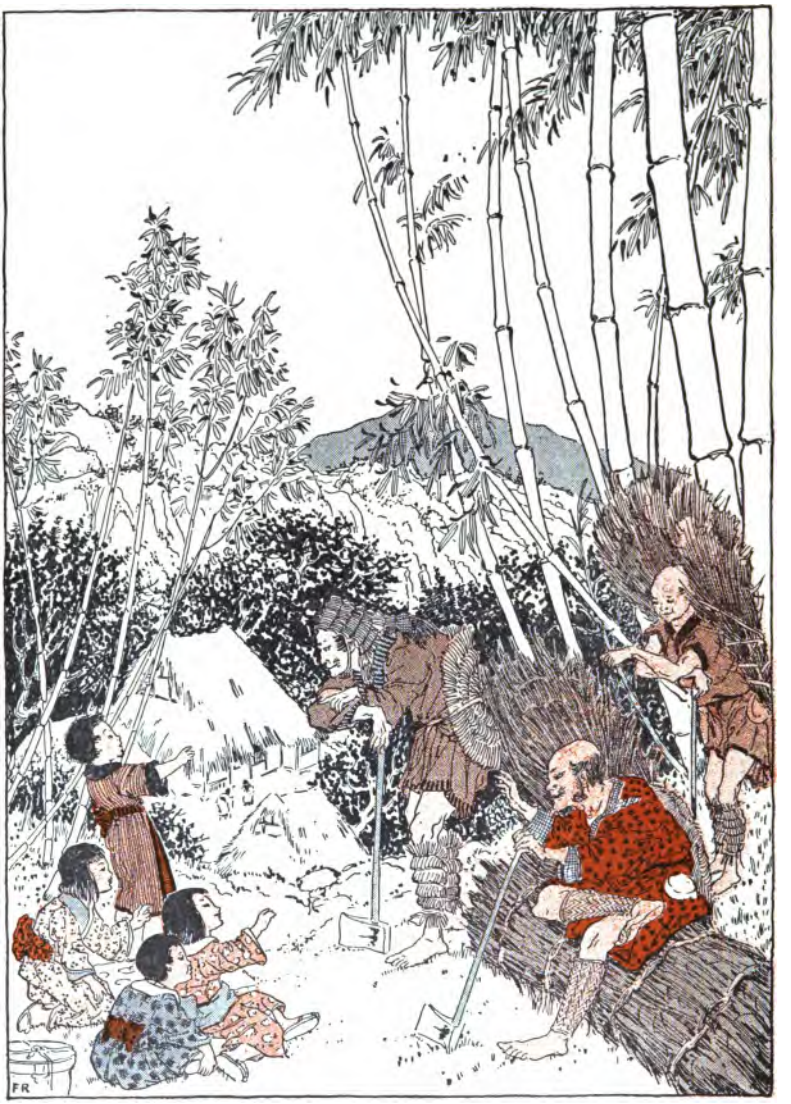

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So the mighty tree was cut down and carried to the seashore.

When the wood-cutters returned to the forest, the children gathered around them and cried, "Good wood-cutters, do not cut down the little bamboo. It is our friend. We call it Fairy Queen. It is our tree and we love it. Every day we come here to play, and we shall be very unhappy if you harm our little tree."

THE LITTLE TREE

"You may keep your little tree," said one of the wood-cutters, "if you will dig it up and plant it in your garden. Our master has ordered us to cut down all the trees in this forest so that he may have rice-fields here; and your little tree will be cut down with the rest, unless you root it up and carry it away."

The wood-cutters were kind-hearted men. They even helped the children dig up the little bamboo so that its roots might not be broken; and in a sunny garden beside the sea, they planted their Fairy Queen.

Then a strange thing happened. In the great forest the little tree had been surrounded by

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larger companions and it did not receive enough sunshine or rain to make it grow. But in the pleasant garden it was far away from all other trees, and every drop of rain watered its roots, and the sun kissed its leaves from morning till night.

As the days went by, the little tree grew and grew, and at last it became large and beautiful; but it was never as tall or as strong as the boasting bamboo that had once stood beside it in the forest. The children loved the little bamboo as well as ever, and it was very happy.

One day there was a terrible storm. The wind blew in mighty blasts, and the waves beat upon the shore and frightened the children so much that they ran home in terror. The little bamboo was frightened, too. It bowed before the wind until its top almost touched the ground; but the trunk did not break and the roots held fast.

Soon there was a great crash, and the broken mast of a junk was cast up on the shore almost at the foot of the little tree. She looked down in surprise and saw that it was the boasting

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bamboo that had been her companion in the forest.

"Oh! how sorry I am!" said Fairy Queen. "Can I do anything for you?"

"No, thank you; no one can do anything for me now," replied the mast. "I have been crushed by the waves. How foolish I was to boast because I was so large! I should have been much happier if I had been a beautiful little tree like you, with the children to love me."

When the mast had said this, she sighed and ceased to speak.

Next day, wood-cutters came with their axes and cut the mast into firewood. The children came to watch them as they worked, and they picked up the chips, made believe they were boats, and tossed them upon the water. They did not know that this was the great bamboo under which they had once played in the forest. Only Fairy Queen knew that, but she said nothing. And that was the end of the boasting bamboo.

—*Japanese Myth.*

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THE MEASURE OF RICE

There was once a king who had an officer called the price maker. The duty of the price maker was to set the price for everything that the king bought from his subjects.

The king was dishonest; but the price maker was honest. He made the king pay fair prices for all he bought; so the king did not like him.

One day, the king met a poor stupid beggar and asked him if he would like to be the price maker. The beggar said that he would willingly take the office; so the king sent the honest price maker away.

Now, the new price maker did not know the value of money; so, of course, he did not know how much to pay for the things that the king wanted to buy. Some of the prices he made were very amusing.

One day, a farmer came to sell the king five hundred horses for his army. The king asked the price maker what the horses were worth, and all the people listened to hear.

"Five hundred horses are worth a measure of

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rice," said the price maker; while all the people laughed.

But the king gave the farmer a measure of rice and sent the horses away to his stable.

The poor farmer did not know what to do. The horses were worth enough to make him rich, yet he had received only a measure of rice for them. He went to one of his friends and asked him what he should do.

The farmer's friend replied, "Go to the price maker and say, 'If five hundred horses are worth a measure of rice, what is a measure of rice worth?'"

The farmer did as his friend bade him. When he came to the price maker, he said: "What are five hundred horses worth?"

"A measure of rice," replied the price maker.

"Very well," said the farmer. "Now tell me what a measure of rice is worth?"

"What is a measure of rice worth? What is a measure of rice worth?" muttered the price maker, as he tried very hard to think. At last he answered, "Oh, a measure of rice is worth——."

What do you think it was? I am sure you

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could never guess. It was such a funny answer that the farmer laughed and asked the price maker to go with him to the king.

The price maker consented to do this; and when they came to the king, the farmer said, "O King, to-day I have learned that five hundred horses are worth a measure of rice. Now I wish to ask a favor. Will the price maker tell me what a measure of rice is worth?"

"Certainly," replied the king, who did not suspect what the farmer was trying to do. Then he turned to the price maker and said, "What is a measure of rice worth?"

"A measure of rice," replied the price maker, as all the people listened to hear, "is worth the whole city."

When the people heard this, they laughed, and the king was so angry that he drove the stupid price maker away. Then he sent for the honest price maker and paid the farmer a fair price for his horses.

—*Hindu Tale.*

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THE MERCHANT OF SERI

In the city of Seri there was a merchant who went about the streets selling pots and pans. Some of his wares were made of tin and some of brass, and as he went along, he called out, "Who will buy my pots? Who will buy my pans? Who will buy my brass? Who will buy my tins?"

The merchant of Seri was honest and all the people liked to buy of him.

One day, a merchant from another city came to sell pots and pans in Seri. He called out, "Buy my pots! Buy my pans!" and the people hurried to their doors and windows to see what he had to sell.

In a little tumbled-down house lived an old woman and her granddaughter. Once they had been rich, but now they were very poor. When the little girl heard the merchant calling, she ran to the window and looked out.

"O grandma," she said, "please ask the merchant to give us a new bowl for the old one on the kitchen shelf."

It was a golden bowl, but neither the grand-

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mother nor the little girl knew it. It was the only thing the grandmother had saved from the days when her husband was a rich merchant, and she had kept it because he had liked to eat his rice from it.

"The merchant will not give us anything for the old bowl," replied the grandmother; "and we have nothing else to trade with him."

"Come, grandma, let us ask him, anyway," insisted the little girl. So the grandmother took down the bowl and followed her granddaughter into the street.

"Will you give my little girl a dish for this old bowl?" she asked.

The merchant took the bowl in his hands and scratched it with a knife. He saw that it was made of gold; but he was dishonest and thought he would be able to get it for nothing. So he threw it on the ground. "This old bowl is worthless," he said. "I cannot give you anything for it."

He went on his way, while the poor old grandmother picked up the bowl and carried it back into the house.

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Soon the Merchant of Seri came through the street selling his wares. When the little girl heard him calling, she said, "Look, grandma, here is the Merchant of Seri. Perhaps he will give us something in exchange for the bowl."

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Again the grandmother took the bowl and carried it to the merchant. He examined it carefully while a smile spread over his face.

"This is a golden bowl," said he. "All my wealth is not enough to purchase it. I will give you my bags of gold. I will give you all my wares of brass and tin. Only give me the bowl in exchange and I shall be richer than you."

The exchange was soon made and the grandmother and the little girl rejoiced at their good fortune.

In a little while, the dishonest merchant came back and rapped at the cottage door.

"I will give you something for the old bowl," said he.

"You tried to deceive us," replied the grandmother, "and now you are too late. It was a golden bowl and we have sold it to another merchant."

So the good Merchant of Seri had the bowl, which he sold for a great price; and the grandmother and the little girl had enough money to supply their wants as long as they lived.

—*Hindu Tale.*

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CHICKADEE

Then piped a tiny voice hard by,
Gay and polite, a cheerful cry,
"Chick-a-dee-dee!" saucy note
Out of sound heart and merry throat
As if it said, "Good day, good sir!
Fine afternoon, old passenger!
Happy to meet you in these places
Where January brings few faces."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

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THE WIND

I saw you toss the kites on high,
And blow the birds about the sky,
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
O wind, a-blowing all day long;
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid;
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all—
O wind, a-blowing all day long;
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long;
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

—*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

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THE EYES IN THE PEACOCK'S TAIL

Jupiter and Juno were king and queen of the gods. They lived in a gilded palace on the top of Mount Olympus.

At the foot of the mountain flowed a beautiful river, which from the mountain looked like a thread of silver in the valley below.

On the bank of the river lived the maiden Io. Jupiter often went down to the shiny river to talk to Io. This made Juno very angry.

One morning, therefore, she went down into the valley to see what Io was doing; but when she came to the river there was no maiden to be seen. There was only a white cow eating the dewy grass.

Juno guessed that Jupiter had changed Io into a cow to deceive her. So she sent Argus to watch the white cow. Argus had one hundred eyes, and Juno thought that all of them could never fall asleep at once. Sometimes the two eyes of a watchman fall asleep; but if two of the eyes of Argus fell asleep, he would still have ninety-eight eyes with which to watch.

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Never for a moment did Argus take his eyes off the cow. All day long he watched her feed by the river, and at night he tied a rope around her neck and fastened her to a tree.

Io was very uncomfortable because the hundred eyes were always gazing at her. Jupiter pitied her so much that at last he sent Mercury to set her free. Now, Mercury had been made the messenger of the gods because he traveled so quickly. He very soon came to the beautiful river and sat down near the place where Argus was watching Io.

While he sat there, Mercury began to play softly upon his lyre, and soon the mighty head of Argus began to nod and his eyes began to grow dim. At last, all of the eyes were closed in sleep. Then Mercury drew his sword and slew the sleeping monster, and Jupiter came and changed Io back into a maiden.

Juno was so angry at what Mercury had done that she put the eyes of Argus in the tail of her peacock, and there they remain to this day.

—*Greek Myth.*

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HOW A THISTLE SAVED SCOTLAND

The Scots were brave and free. They lived in their island home where their fathers had lived before them. They had fields of grain in the valleys and flocks of sheep and herds of cattle feeding on the rugged hillsides.

At last, Northmen, who lived across the sea, came to rob and plunder the country. The brave Scots collected an army and drove the invaders away many times; but they always came back again.

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Then came a time when the Northmen landed on the Scottish shores at night. The armed Scots were encamped near by; but believing that their enemies were far away across the sea, they were fast asleep.

Just before daybreak, the daring robbers began to steal up the hill to surprise the sleeping army. At that same instant the sun peeped over the hilltop and saw the danger to the Scots. It shone in the eyes of the sleeping men and tried to waken them; but they slept as soundly as before. Then the morning breeze awoke and blew on the faces of the warriors; but it could not waken them.

Silently the Northmen advanced, until they had almost reached the slumbering Scots. Then one of them stepped on a thistle with his bare foot, and his cry of pain aroused the sleepers. They sprang to their feet shouting, "The Northmen are coming! The Northmen are coming!"

They soon drove the robbers back to their ships; and since that time the Scots have always loved the thistle.

—*Scottish Legend.*

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THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

Ponce de Leon, or lion, was born in the city of Leon, in Spain, in the year 1460. From

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his earliest years he was fond of adventure and longed to be a soldier.

When he was very young, he was made a page in the home of a nobleman, where he was taught obedience and good manners. He was trained to hunt with the hawk and to use his sword to protect himself.

As soon as Ponce was old enough to join the army, he fought in the wars against the Moors. These Moors were Moslems, who had come from Africa to fight against the Christians in Spain.

When Columbus returned to Spain after the discovery of America, Ponce was thrilled with the account of the voyage. So when Columbus started on his second voyage in 1493, Ponce was one of those who went with him.

Ponce remained in America as governor of one of the islands that had been discovered. Later, he conquered the Indians of Porto Rico and became its first governor.

Years passed by and Ponce began to realize that he was growing old. Like many other men, he wished to be young again.

The people of Europe believed that somewhere

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in India there was a magical fountain whose waters would make the old young again; and since every one thought that the land Columbus had discovered was India, Ponce built two ships and set out to find the fountain of youth.

After sailing for a few days, he reached the continent of North America. It was Easter morning, and as that day is called Pascue Florida in Spanish, Ponce named the country Florida.

He was welcomed by the Indians and journeyed far and wide, bathing in all the springs and rivers that he saw.

But in spite of his efforts, his youth was not renewed, and Ponce sadly returned to Porto Rico, where he lived for many years.

When he had grown to be a very old man, he sailed to Florida again; but this time the Indians were unfriendly and drove him back to his ship. Sailing to Cuba, he soon died in sorrow and disappointment. On his tombstone is written: "In this grave rest the bones of a man who was a lion by name and still more by nature."

—Adapted from Washington Irving.

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WHERE GO THE BOATS?

Dark brown is the river,
  Golden is the sand.
It flows along for ever,
  With trees on either hand.

Green leaves a-floating,
  Castles of the foam,
Boats of mine a-boating—
  Where will all come home?

On goes the river
  And out past the mill,
Away down the valley,
  Away down the hill.

Away down the river,
  A hundred miles or more,
Other little children
  Shall bring my boats ashore.

—*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

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THE LITTLE TIN SOLDIER

There were once five and twenty tin soldiers who were brothers, for they had all been made from the same old tin spoon. They were very grand in their new red and blue uniforms, as they shouldered their guns and looked straight before them.

The first thing the soldiers ever heard were the words, "Tin Soldiers!" shouted by a little boy, who clapped his hands with delight when the lid was taken off the box in which they lived.

It was the little boy's birthday, and the soldiers had been given to him for a birthday present. The little boy took the soldiers out of the box, and stood them on the table. They were exactly alike, except one, who had only one leg. He was the last one to be made, and there had not been enough tin to finish him; but he stood as firmly on one leg as the others did on two.

There were many other playthings on the table where the soldiers stood; but the most attractive one was a pretty little paper castle. The windows were very tiny, but still one could look through them and see the inside of the rooms. In front

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of the castle stood little trees around a piece of looking-glass, which looked like a lake of clear water. Beautiful little wax swans were swimming about the lake and were reflected on its glassy surface.

This was all very pretty; but the prettiest thing of all was a tiny little lady, who stood at the open door of the castle. She also was made of paper; but her dress was of the thinnest muslin, with a narrow blue ribbon like a scarf over her shoulders. At the middle of the ribbon was a shining tinsel rose as big as her whole face.

The little lady stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer, and she raised one foot so high that the tin soldier could not see it at all, and thought that she also had but one leg.

"She would make a fine wife for me," said the soldier; "only she is so grand and lives in a castle, while I have only a box to live in. Besides, there are five-and-twenty of us in the box, and there is no room for her. Still I must try to become acquainted with her."

Then he lay down at full length behind the

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snuff-box, where he could watch the dainty little lady, who still stood on one leg without losing her balance.

When evening came, the tin soldiers were put into the box—that is, all of them except the soldier with one leg, who was left standing on the table—and the people of the house went to bed. Then the toys began to play and have jolly times on the table. The tin soldiers rattled in their box, for they wanted to get out and play with the others; but they could not lift the lid. The nut-cracker turned somersets, and the pencil jumped about the table. They made so much noise that the canary woke up and began to sing in the middle of the night. Only the tin soldier and the dancer remained in their places. She stretched out both her arms and stood on tiptoe as firmly as he did on his one leg. He never turned his eyes from her, even for a single moment.

THE GOBLIN

The clock struck twelve. Up flew the lid of the snuff-box, but there was no snuff in it; for

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it was not a real snuff-box, but only the house of a goblin named Jack-in-the-Box.

The goblin looked very fierce and said, "Tin soldier, keep your eyes to yourself."

The tin soldier pretended not to hear him,

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and that made the goblin very angry. He snapped his teeth and said, "Only wait till to-morrow! Then you'll see!"

The next morning, the children put the tin soldier in the window. No one knows whether it was the goblin or the wind that did it, but it is certain that the soldier fell from the third story window to the street below. It was a terrible fall. He landed on his head, and his bayonet wedged in between some stones and held him there with his one leg straight up in the air.

The maid and the little boy went downstairs to look for him; but, although they nearly stepped upon him they could not find him. If the soldier had called out, "Here I am!" they would have found him; but he did not care to call for help, because he was a soldier.

Then it began to rain. The drops fell faster and faster until there was a regular shower. When the shower was over, two boys who were idling about the street happened to pass by.

"Look," said one of them, "here is a tin soldier. He ought to have a boat to sit in."

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So they made a boat from a newspaper, and stood the tin soldier in it and sent him sailing down the gutter. Then the two boys ran along beside him clapping their hands. The waves were very high and the current was very strong. The paper boat rocked up and down, and it sometimes turned around so quickly that the soldier trembled; but he remained at his post. He shouldered his musket and looked straight before him.

All at once, the boat shot into a long drain, where it was as dark as it was in the box where the other tin soldiers lived.

"Where am I going now?" thought he. "This must surely be the goblin's fault. Oh! if only the little lady were here with me in the boat, I should not care how dark it was."

A huge water-rat that lived under the bridge soon made his appearance.

"Have you a passport?" asked the rat; but the tin soldier remained silent and held his musket tighter than ever.

The boat flew past and the rat followed. How

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he gnashed his teeth and called out to the wood shavings and the straw. "Stop him! stop him! he has not paid his toll or shown his passport."

The stream bore the tin soldier on more rapidly than ever, and he could already see daylight where the drain ended. Then he heard a rushing sound that was enough to frighten the bravest man. At the end of the drain the water fell into a canal; this was as dangerous for his tiny craft as going over a waterfall would be for a boat.

The little paper boat dashed on, but the soldier stood as firmly as he could, to show that he was not afraid. The boat whirled around three or four times until it was filled with water. Then it began to sink. The tin soldier stood up to his neck in water, while the boat sank deeper and deeper. Soon the water closed over his head. He thought of the pretty little dancer whom he should never see again, and he was very sad.

Then the paper boat became soft and was torn to pieces. The soldier dropped down deeper into the water, but was instantly swallowed by

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a huge fish.

Oh, how dark it was inside the fish! It was even darker than it was in the drain, and there was no room for him to move; but the tin soldier kept his courage and lay at full length with his gun on his shoulder.

The fish swam about, making the most fear-

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ful movements, but at last it became quite still. Then a flash of lightning seemed to dart through him. Daylight appeared, and a voice called out, "As I am alive, the tin soldier!" The fish had been caught, taken to the market and sold to the cook, who took him to the kitchen and cut him open with a large knife. She picked up the soldier, held him by the waist between her thumb and finger, and carried him into another room where everybody was surprised to see this wonderful soldier who had traveled about inside a fish. But he was not at all proud.

They put him on the table. What curious things happen in the world! The soldier was in the very same room in which he had been before. He saw the same children, and the same toys stood on the table; and there was the same castle with the pretty little dancer. She was still standing on one foot and holding up the other. She was as firm and as faithful as he was. He was almost moved to tears. He looked at her and she looked at him; but they said nothing.

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Then one of the little boys took up the tin soldier and threw him into the stove. He gave no reason for doing this, so it must have been the fault of the goblin.

The flames gathered around him and the heat was terrible; but he could not tell whether the heat came from the fire or from love. His bright red and blue colors were gone, but whether that had happened on his travels or had been caused by sorrow, no one could say. He looked at the little lady and she looked at him. He felt himself melting away, but still he stood there with his gun on his shoulder.

Suddenly the door of the room opened, and the wind caught up the dancer and whirled her right into the stove beside the tin soldier. Instantly, she was caught up by the flames and was gone. The tin soldier melted down to a lump, and the next morning when the maid took out the ashes, she found him in the shape of a little tin heart. Nothing remained of the dancer but the tinsel rose, and that was burned as black as a coal.

—*Hans Christian Andersen.*

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THE JUMBLIES

They went to sea in a sieve, they did;
In a sieve they went to sea;
In spite of all their friends could say,
On a winter's morn, on a stormy day,
In a sieve they went to sea.
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live:
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue
And they went to sea in a sieve.

They sailed away in a sieve, they did,
In a sieve they sailed so fast,
With only a beautiful pea-green veil
Tied with a ribbon, by way of a sail,
To a small tobacco-pipe mast.
And every one said who saw them go,
"Oh! won't they be soon upset, you know?
For the sky is dark, and the voyage is long;
And happen what may, it's extremely wrong
In a sieve to sail so fast."

They sailed to the Western Sea, they did—
To a land all covered with trees;

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And they bought an owl and a useful cart,
And a pound of rice and a cranberry-tart,
  And a hive of silver bees;
And they bought a pig, and some green jackdaws,
And a lovely monkey with lollipop paws,
And forty bottles of ring-bo-ree,
  And no end of Stilton cheese.

And in twenty years they all came back—
  In twenty years or more;
And every one said, "How tall they've grown!
For they've been to the Lakes and the Torrible
    Zone,
  And the hills of the Chankly Bore."
And they drank their health and gave them a
    feast
Of dumplings made of beautiful yeast;
And every one said, "If we only live,
We, too, will go to sea in a sieve,
  To the hills of the Chankly Bore."
Far and few, far and few,
  Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue
  And they went to sea in a sieve.

—*Edward Lear.*

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PINOCCHIO

THE STORY OF A MARIONETTE

Once upon a time there was a piece of wood. It was not worth much. It was only a piece of firewood like those that we burn in winter in the stove or in the fireplace to warm the rooms.

I cannot say how it happened; but one fine day an old carpenter found this piece of wood in his shop. The name of the carpenter was Master Antonio, but almost everybody called him Master Cherry because the end of his nose was almost as red as a ripe cherry.

When Master Cherry saw the piece of wood, he was pleased. He rubbed his hands together with delight, and said softly to himself,

"This wood has come just at the right time. I will use it to make a leg for the table."

As soon as he had said this, he took a sharp axe to cut away the bark. But before he could strike the first blow, he stopped with the axe held high in the air. He had heard a small voice say, "Do not strike me so hard!"

Master Cherry was very much surprised. He turned his eyes all around the room to see where

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the little voice came from. He looked under the bench. He looked in the cupboard. He looked in the basket of shavings. He even opened the door of the shop and looked into the street; but no one could he see.

At last Master Cherry laughed and began to scratch his head.

"I see how it all is," he said. "I only imagined I heard some one speak."

Again he took up the axe, and this time he struck the piece of wood a terrible blow.

"Oh! you have hurt me!" cried the same little voice.

Master Cherry stood as still as if he had turned to stone. His eyes started out of his head with fright. His mouth remained open, and his tongue hung down almost to the edge of his chin.

He was trembling with fear, but as soon as he was able to speak, he said, "Where on earth did that little voice come from? There is no one here. Is it possible this piece of wood has learned to cry and speak like a child? I cannot believe it. It is only a piece of firewood. If I threw it on

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the fire, it would boil a pot of beans. Can anyone be hiding inside it? If anyone is hiding there, so much the worse for him. I will settle him at once."

As he said this, he took the poor piece of wood in his hands and began to beat it against the wall.

Then he stopped to listen to see if he could hear the little voice. He waited two minutes. He waited five minutes. He waited ten minutes. But he could hear nothing.

"I see how it all is," said he, as he tried to laugh and pushed his wig back into place. "I only imagined I heard some one speak."

But all the time he was much frightened, and he tried to sing to give himself a little courage.

He put aside the axe and took his plane, but as soon as he began to smooth the wood, the little voice laughed and said,

"Stop! you are tickling me!"

This time Master Cherry fell down as if he had been struck by lightning. At last, when he opened his eyes, he found himself sitting on the floor. His face was quite white, and the

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end of his nose, instead of being red, had become blue from fright.

MASTER CHERRY'S VISITOR

At that moment some one knocked at the door.

"Come in," said the carpenter; for he did not have the strength to rise to his feet.

A little old man at once walked into the shop. His name was Gepetto, but some of the bad boys called him "*Indian Pudding*," because his yellow wig looked so much like a pudding.

"Good day, Master Antonio," said Gepetto. "What are you doing there on the floor?"

"I am teaching the A-B-C's to the ants," said Antonio. "What can I do for you?"

"I have come to ask a favor of you," said Gepetto.

"Well, here I am, ready to serve you," replied the carpenter, as he rose to his knees.

"This morning an idea came into my head," said Gepetto. "I thought I would make a wonderful puppet or marionette that could run and jump. With it I could travel about the world

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and earn a living."

"Good for you, Indian Pudding," shouted the same little voice that had frightened Antonio.

Gepetto was very angry and said, "Why do you insult me?"

"I did not insult you," said Antonio.

"Yes, you did," said Gepetto. "I heard what you said, but I shall not quarrel with you. Give me a piece of wood so I can make my marionette, and I shall go home at once and not trouble you again."

Master Antonio was delighted. He went to the bench and got the piece of wood that had frightened him. But just as he was going to give it to his friend, the piece of wood jumped out of his hands and struck Gepetto a terrible blow upon the knees.

"You have a nice way of giving presents," said Gepetto. "You have almost lamed me!"

"I did not do it. It was the wood," said Antonio.

"I do not believe you," said Gepetto, as he limped out of the door with the piece of wood in his hand.

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Gepetto lived in a small room with one window. The only furniture he had was an old chair, a bed, and a broken table. At one end of the room there was a fireplace in which a fire was burning; but the fire was only painted. Over the fire was a painted kettle that seemed to be boiling and sending out clouds of steam.

As soon as he reached home, Gepetto took his tools and began to make his marionette.

"What name shall I give him?" he said to himself. "I think I shall call him Pinocchio. It is a name that will bring him luck. I once knew a whole family that was named Pinocchio. The father was named Pinocchio; the mother was named Pinocchio; and all the little children were named Pinocchio, also."

Having found a name for the marionette, he began to work in earnest. First he made the hair, then the forehead, and then the eyes.

As soon as the eyes were finished, he was surprised to see them move and begin to stare at him. Soon he became angry.

"Wooden eyes," he said, "why do you stare

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at me?"

No one answered.

Then he took his knife and made the nose; but as soon as he had finished it, it began to grow. It grew, and it grew until it seemed as if it never would stop growing.

Gepetto cut it off, and cut it off, until he was tired; but it only grew longer and longer.

Before he had finished the mouth, it began to laugh and make fun of him.

"Stop laughing!" said Gepetto; but he might as well have spoken to the wall.

"Stop laughing, I say!" he shouted in an angry voice.

The mouth then stopped laughing, but stuck out its tongue as far as it would go.

Gepetto pretended not to see this, and went on with his work. After the mouth was finished, he made the chin, then the throat, then the arms and the hands.

As soon as he had made the hands, Gepetto felt his wig pulled off. He turned around, and what do you think he saw? He saw his yellow wig in the hands of the marionette.

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"Pinocchio, give me back my wig!" he shouted.

But instead of giving it back, Pinocchio put it on his own head, and was almost smothered by it.

Pinocchio's conduct made Gepetto feel very sad, and he dried a tear.

"You young rascal!" he said. "You are not yet finished, and still you do not have respect for your father. You are a bad, bad boy!"

Then he began to make the legs and the feet; but before they were finished, they began to kick him.

"I deserve it," he said to himself. "I should have thought of it before. Now it is too late."

Then he placed the marionette on the floor and began to teach him to walk. At first his legs were stiff, and he could not move. But Gepetto held him by the hand and showed him how to put one foot before the other.

PINOCCHIO RUNS AWAY

After a few moments, Pinocchio began to walk and then to run about the room. At last he jumped through the open door and ran down the street.

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Gepetto ran after him, but he was not able to catch him. Pinocchio leaped like a rabbit. His wooden feet made more noise on the pavement than twenty pairs of heavy shoes.

"Stop him! Stop him!" shouted Gepetto.

But the people only stood still with wonder, as the marionette ran past them like a racehorse. They only laughed at Gepetto as he ran after him.

At last, a soldier heard the noise and thought that a colt had escaped from his master. He placed himself in the middle of the road with his feet spread apart so that nothing could pass him.

When Pinocchio saw him, he tried to escape him by passing between his legs. But the soldier caught him by the nose and held him fast. It was a very large nose and just the size to be held by a soldier.

As soon as the soldier put Pinocchio into the hands of Gepetto, the old man tried to punish the marionette by pulling his ears. But just think how surprised he was because he could not find them. In his hurry to finish the marionette, he had forgotten to make the ears.

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So he took him by the neck and led him away. As they went along Gepetto said,

"We will go home now and settle this affair."

But Pinocchio threw himself on the ground and would not take another step. Soon a crowd of idle persons gathered and made a ring about them. Some of them said one thing, and some another.

"Poor marionette!" said several. "He is right in not wishing to go home. Who knows how that bad old Gepetto will beat him!"

Some one said, "Gepetto seems like a good man, but with boys he is very cruel. If that poor marionette is left in his hands, he will tear him in pieces."

So at last the soldier set Pinocchio free, and led Gepetto away to prison. The poor man, who had done nothing wrong, cried like a child. When he came to the prison, he said,

"Wicked boy! And I tried so hard to make a good marionette! But it serves me right. I should have thought of it before."

What was done afterwards is a story that is very hard to believe; but I will tell it to you just

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as it happened.

THE TALKING CRICKET

While poor Gepetto was being taken to prison for no fault of his, that imp Pinocchio, finding himself free from the hands of the soldier, ran off as fast as his legs could carry him. In order that he might reach home quicker, he ran across the fields. In his hurry, he jumped over banks, hedges, and ditches full of water, just as a wild animal would have done, if chased by hunters.

When he came to the house, he found the door was not locked. So he opened it and went in. He threw himself on the floor to rest, but he quickly got up again. He heard some one in the room who was saying, "Cri-cri-cri!"

"Who calls me?" said Pinocchio in a fright.

"It is I!" said the voice.

Pinocchio turned around and saw a big cricket crawling slowly up the wall.

"Tell me, Cricket, who may you be?" said he.

"I am the talking cricket," said the cricket, "and I have lived in this room for more than a

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hundred years."

"It doesn't matter how long you have lived here," said the marionette. "The room is mine now, and you will do me a favor by going away at once, without even turning around."

"I will not go away," said the cricket, "until I have told you a great truth."

"Tell it to me, then," said Pinocchio; "and be quick about it."

"Woe to those boys who rebel against their parents, and run away from home," said the cricket. "They will never have any good luck, and sooner or later, they will be very sorry."

"Sing away, little cricket, as long as you please," said Pinocchio. "But I have made up my mind to run away to-morrow morning as soon as it is light. If I stay here, what happens to other boys will happen to me, also. I shall be sent to school and shall be made to study. To tell you the truth, I do not wish to study. It is much more amusing to run after butterflies, and to climb trees and take the young birds out of their nests."

"Poor little goose!" said the cricket. "Do

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you not know that you will grow up to be a perfect donkey, and every one will make fun of you?"

"Hold your tongue, you wicked old cricket!" shouted Pinocchio.

But the cricket was not angry. It only said, "But if you do not wish to go to school, why do you not learn a trade? Then you will be able to earn a piece of bread."

"Do you want me to tell you?" replied Pinocchio. "Well, I will tell you. Among all the trades in the world there is only one that I like."

"And what is that?" asked the cricket.

"It is to eat, drink, sleep, and amuse myself, and to lead an idle life from morning until night."

"As a rule," said the talking cricket, "those who follow that trade end in a hospital or in a prison."

"Take care," said Pinocchio, "or you will make me angry."

"Poor Pinocchio! how I pity you!" said the cricket.

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"Why do you pity me?" said Pinocchio.

"Because you are a marionette," said the cricket. "And what is worse, you have a wooden head."

At these last words Pinocchio jumped up in a rage, and taking a wooden mallet from the bench, he threw it at the talking cricket. Perhaps he never meant to hit him; but unfortunately he struck him exactly on the head. The poor cricket had hardly breath to cry out "Cri-cri-cri," before he was flattened against the wall.

PINOCCHIO'S HUNGER

Night was coming on, and Pinocchio remembered that he had eaten nothing all day. He began to feel a gnawing in his stomach that was very much like an appetite. In fact, his hunger grew so quickly that he could hardly wait for something to eat.

He ran to the fireplace, where a kettle was boiling. He was about to take off the lid to see what was in it, when he saw that the kettle was only painted on the wall. You can imagine

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his feelings. His nose began to grow again, and became three inches longer.

Then he began to run about the room. He looked in drawers and in every other place for a bit of bread. He thought there must be a crust of bread or a bone, but he could find nothing at all.

And all the time his hunger grew and grew until he felt as if he should faint. At last, he began to cry.

"The talking cricket was right," he sobbed. "It was wrong to disobey my father and run away from home. If he were here now, I should not be dying of hunger. Oh! what a dreadful thing hunger is!"

Just then he thought he saw something on the floor. It was round and white and looked like a hen's egg. He sprang to seize it. It was indeed an egg.

Pinocchio was overjoyed. Thinking it was a dream, he kept turning the egg over in his hands. He felt it and kissed it again and again.

"Now how shall I cook it?" he said. "Shall I make an omelet? Shall I fry it? Or, shall I boil

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it? No, the quickest way of all is to cook it in a bowl of hot water. I am in such a hurry to eat it."

So he placed a bowl over the fire. Instead of oil or butter, he poured a little water into it. When the water began to boil, he broke the egg-shell over it, so that the egg might drop in. But instead of the yolk and the white, a little chicken hopped out. It was a very gay little chicken and it made Pinocchio a polite little bow.

"Many thanks, Master Pinocchio, for saving me the trouble of breaking the shell," it said. "Good-by until we meet again. Keep well and give my best wishes to all at home."

As it said this, the chicken flew through the open window and was soon lost to sight.

The poor marionette stood there staring out of the window. His mouth was open and the empty eggshell was in his hand. But as soon as his surprise was over, he began to cry and scream and stamp his feet on the floor.

"Yes, the talking cricket was right," he said, between his sobs. "If I had not run away from

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home, and if my papa were here, I should not now be dying of hunger! What a terrible thing it is to be hungry!"

The sight of food had made him more hungry than ever. So he thought he would leave the house and go out to look for some one who would give him a piece of bread.

PINOCCHIO LOSES HIS FEET

It was a wild and stormy night. The thunder was terrible, and the lightning was so bright that the sky seemed on fire. A strong wind was blowing clouds of dust over the streets and making the trees creak as it passed.

Pinocchio was afraid of thunder; but hunger was stronger than fear. So he closed the door and ran to the village. He ran so fast that he panted like a dog after a chase.

But he found the village all dark and deserted. The shops were closed, the windows were shut, and there was not even a dog in the street. It seemed like the land of the dead.

Pinocchio took hold of a doorbell and began to ring it with all his might. He said to him-

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self, "That will bring somebody."

And so it did. A little old man with a night-cap on his head appeared at a window and called to him in an angry voice,

"What do you want at such an hour of the night?"

"Would you be kind enough to give me a little bread?" said Pinocchio.

"Wait there and I will come back directly," said the little old man.

He thought the marionette was one of the bad boys who ring doorbells at night to disturb people who are sleeping.

In half a minute the window was opened again, and the voice of the little old man called to Pinocchio, "Come near the house and hold out your cap."

Pinocchio pulled off his cap; but just as he held it out a great basin of water was poured down on him. It wet him from head to foot as if he had been a pot of dried-up roses.

Pinocchio went home like a wet chicken. He was tired and hungry, and so he sat down in front of the fireplace to dry his wet feet.

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And then he fell asleep; and while he was asleep, his feet, which were made of wood, took fire and were burned to cinders. Pinocchio slept on as if his feet belonged to some one else. At last, about daybreak, he awoke because some one was knocking at the door.

"Who is there?" he asked, yawning and rubbing his eyes.

"It is I!" answered a voice.

And the voice was the voice of Gepetto.

GEPETTO RETURNS HOME

Poor Pinocchio, whose eyes were not half open yet, had not noticed that his feet were burned off. So as soon as he heard his father's voice, he jumped up and started for the door; but after he had stumbled two or three times, he fell flat on the floor. The noise he made in falling was like that of a bag of wood that had been thrown from a fifth story window.

"Open the door!" shouted Gepetto from the street.

"Dear papa, I cannot," said the marionette, as he cried and rolled about on the floor.

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"Why can't you?" asked Gepetto.

"Because my feet have been eaten," said Pinocchio.

"And who has eaten your feet?" asked Gepetto.

"The cat," said Pinocchio; for he saw her playing with some shavings, and thought she had eaten his feet.

"Open the door, I tell you!" shouted Gepetto. "If you don't, when I get into the house, I shall punish you."

"Believe me, father," said Pinocchio, "I cannot walk. I shall have to walk on my knees for the rest of my life."

Gepetto thought the marionette was trying to deceive him, so he climbed up the side of the house and came in through the window. He was very angry; but when he saw Pinocchio lying on the floor without any feet, he felt very sorry for him. He took him up in his arms and kissed him, and said, "My little Pinocchio, how did you happen to burn your feet?"

"I don't know, papa," said Pinocchio. "It was a terrible night. It thundered and lightened. I was very hungry, and the talking cricket

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said to me, 'It serves you right. You were bad and ran away from home.' Then I said, 'Take care, Cricket;' and he said, 'You are a marionette and have a wooden head.' So I threw the hammer at him and he died; but it was his fault for I did not wish to kill him.

"Then I found an egg and tried to cook it; but a chicken flew out of the shell and said, 'Good-by until we meet again.' I was so hungry that I went to the village to beg for something to eat; but an old man poured a basin of water on my head. So I came home and sat down before the fire to dry my feet. I must have fallen asleep, with my feet near the fire, for when I awoke, they were burned off. Now I am hungry."

Gepetto could not understand all that the marionette had told him, but he did understand that he was dying of hunger. So he took three pears from his pocket.

"These three pears," he said, "were to have been my breakfast; but I am glad to give them to you. Eat them. I hope they will do you good."

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"If you wish me to eat them," said Pinocchio, "be kind enough to peel them for me."

"Peel them?" said Gepetto. "I am surprised to find you are so dainty. In this world you should accustom yourself to eat anything that is set before you."

"No doubt you are right," said Pinocchio; "but I never eat fruit that has not been peeled."

So Gepetto found a knife and peeled the three pears. He put the skins on the corner of the table.

Having eaten the first pear in two mouthfuls, Pinocchio was about to throw away the core; but Gepetto caught hold of his arm.

"Do not throw it away," he said. "In this world everything may be of some use."

"But I have made up my mind that I shall never eat cores!" Pinocchio shouted angrily.

But the three cores, instead of being thrown out of the window, were placed on the table with the skins.

After he had eaten the three pears, Pinocchio yawned and said, "I am still hungry."

"But, my boy, I have nothing more to give

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you," said Gepetto. "I have only the skins and the cores of the three pears."

"Well, if there is nothing else," said Pinocchio, "I will eat the skins."

When he began to eat the skins, he made a sour face; but one after another, he soon ate them all. Then he ate the cores. When he had eaten everything, he said, "Now I feel better."

"You see I was right," said Gepetto, "when I said that we should not be too particular about what we eat. We never can tell what may happen to us."

PINOCCHIO'S NEW FEET

As soon as the marionette had satisfied his hunger, he began to cry because he wanted a new pair of feet. But to punish him for being bad, Gepetto allowed him to cry and complain for half a day.

"Why should I make you new feet?" he said at last. "Perhaps you wish to run away from home again."

"I promise you," said the marionette, sobbing, "that I will always be a good boy."

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"All boys promise that," said Gepetto, "when they wish to get something."

"I promise you that I will go to school and study," said Pinocchio.

"All boys repeat that same story, when they are trying to get something," said Gepetto.

"But I am not like other boys," said Pinocchio. "I am better than all of them, and I always speak the truth. I promise you that I will learn a trade so that I shall be able to care for you in your old age."

Gepetto tried to look cross; but his eyes were full of tears and his heart was full of pity for the poor marionette. Without saying another word, he took his tools and two small pieces of wood and set to work.

In less than an hour the feet were finished. They were as swift and graceful little feet as if they had been made by a great artist.

Then Gepetto said to the marionette, "Shut your eyes and go to sleep!"

So Pinocchio shut his eyes and pretended to go to sleep. While his eyes were shut, Gepetto fastened the feet on with a little glue. He did it

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so well that one could not tell where the legs and the feet were joined.

As soon as the marionette saw that he had feet, he jumped down from the table on which he had been lying. Then he leaped and capered about the room as if he had gone mad with delight.

"To pay you for what you have done for me," said Pinocchio, "I will go to school at once."

"You are a good boy," said Gepetto.

"But if I go to school," said Pinocchio, "I must have some clothes."

Gepetto was so poor that he did not have even as much as a penny in his pocket; but he made Pinocchio a suit of clothes from some wall-paper that was covered with pretty flowers. He also made him a cap of brown paper with a feather stuck in the side.

There was no mirror in the house, and so Pinocchio ran to look at himself in a pail of water. He was so pleased with what he saw that he went about like a peacock.

"I look just like a gentleman," he said.

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"Yes, indeed," said Gepetto; "for bear in mind that fine clothes do not make a gentleman, but clean clothes."

"But," said the marionette, "I am still in want of the most necessary thing to go to school."

"What is that?" asked Gepetto.

"A spelling book," said the marionette.

"You are right," said Gepetto; "but how shall we get one?"

"It is quite easy," said Pinocchio. "You have only to go to the book store and buy one."

"I have no money," said Gepetto. "But wait a minute," he added, as he put on his old coat and ran out of the house.

He soon returned with a spelling book; but the old coat was gone. The poor man was in his shirt sleeves, and it was snowing.

"Where is your coat, papa?" asked Pinocchio.

"I have sold it," said Gepetto.

"Why did you sell it?" asked Pinocchio.

"Because it made me too warm," said his father.

Pinocchio understood the answer. He threw his arms around Gepetto's neck and kissed him.

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As soon as it stopped snowing, Pinocchio set out for school with his spelling book under his arm.

"To-day I shall learn to read," he said to himself as he went along. "To-morrow I shall learn to write; and the day after I shall learn to do problems. Then I shall be able to earn a great deal of money. With the money I shall buy my papa a new coat. It shall be made of gold and silver with diamonds for buttons. I ought to do this for him, because he sold his coat to buy me a spelling book."

While he was saying this, he thought he heard music. It sounded like the noise of fifes and drums. He stopped to listen.

"Where can that music be?" said he to himself. "What a pity that I have to go to school to-day!"

He stood still for a few moments. He was trying to make up his mind what to do. Should he go to school, or should he go after the fifes? At last he decided.

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"To-day I shall go and hear the fifes," he said to himself; "and to-morrow I shall go to school."

Then he ran on and came nearer to the sound of the fifes and the beating of the drum. Soon he found himself in the middle of a throng of people. They were trying to crowd into a small building that was painted in many bright colors.

"What is this place?" asked Pinocchio of a little boy who was standing beside him.

"Read the sign, and then you will know," said the boy.

"I should be glad to read it," said Pinocchio, "but I do not know how to read."

"Blockhead!" said the boy. "Then I will read it for you. The sign says,

'GREAT MARIONETTE THEATER'"

"Has the play begun?" asked Pinocchio.

"It is beginning now," said the boy.

"How much does it cost to go in?" asked the marionette.

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"Two cents," said the boy.

Pinocchio was very anxious to see the show.

"Will you be so kind as to lend me two cents until to-morrow?" he asked.

"I should be very glad to lend them to you," said the boy; "but it happens that I cannot spare them to-day."

"I will sell you my coat for two cents," said the marionette.

"What do you think I could do with a paper coat?" said the boy. "If it rained, I could not get it off my back."

Pinocchio felt very sad. Then he said, "Will you give me two cents for my new spelling book?"

"I am a boy and I don't buy from boys," was the reply.

"I will buy the spelling book for two cents," called out a man who bought old clothes. He had heard what the two boys said, and thought this was a rare bargain.

So the book was sold then and there. And to think that poor Gepetto was at home shivering with the cold because he had sold his coat to buy the spelling book!

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PINOCCHIO GOES TO THE SHOW

When Pinocchio went into the theater, something happened that almost ended the show.

Harlequin and Punchinello were on the stage, and all the people were laughing at the funny things they did. But as soon as Pinocchio entered, Harlequin stopped short and pointed his finger at him.

"Do I dream or am I awake?" he cried. "Surely that is Pinocchio!"

"It is indeed Pinocchio!" cried Punchinello.

"It is Pinocchio! It is Pinocchio!" shouted all the marionettes at once, as they ran on to the stage from all sides. "It is Pinocchio! It is our brother Pinocchio! Long live Pinocchio!"

"Pinocchio, come up here," cried Harlequin, "and throw your arms around your wooden brothers!"

At this invitation, Pinocchio made a leap from the floor. Another leap landed him on the head of the leader of the band, and from there he sprang upon the stage.

The embraces, the hugs, and the kisses that

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Pinocchio received from the other marionettes stopped the whole show. At last the people grew tired of waiting.

"Go on with the play! Go on with the play!" they shouted.

But it was all breath thrown away; for the marionettes put Pinocchio upon their shoulders and carried him about the stage.

Just at that moment out came the showman. He was so big and so ugly that the sight of him was enough to frighten any one. His beard was as black as ink, and so long that it reached from his chin to the ground. I need only to say that he stepped upon it when he walked. His mouth was big and his eyes were like two lanterns with lights burning in them; and in his hand he carried a big whip that he cracked as he walked about.

As soon as he came in, there was silence. No one dared to breathe. You could have heard a pin drop. The poor marionettes trembled like so many leaves.

"Why have you come to stop the play?" he asked of Pinocchio in a gruff voice.

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"Believe me, it was not my fault," said Pinocchio.

"Do not say another word," said the showman. "To-night we will settle this matter."

As soon as the play was over, the showman went into the kitchen, where a fine sheep was roasting for his supper. There was not enough wood to roast it, so he called Harlequin and Punchinello to him.

"Bring that marionette here," he commanded. "You will find him hanging on a nail. He seems to be made of dry wood. If he is thrown on the fire, he will make a fine blaze for the roast."

At first Harlequin and Punchinello did not move; but the showman looked at them so severely that they left the room. In a short time, they returned carrying poor Pinocchio. He was wiggling like an eel out of water, and screaming at the top of his voice. "Papa! papa! save me!" he cried. "I will not die! I will not die!"

The showman was named Fire-eater, and he looked like a terrible man. His black beard covered his chest and legs like an apron; but he

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did not have a bad heart. Indeed, when he saw Pinocchio struggling and screaming, "I will not die! I will not die!" he was sorry for him.

"Are your papa and mamma still alive?" he asked.

"Yes, my papa is," said Pinocchio; "but I never had any mamma."

FIRE-EATER PARDONS PINOCCHIO

"Poor old man! I pity him," said Fire-eater. "Who can say how sorry he would be if I should throw you among those burning coals! So I shall pardon you. To-night I shall have to eat my mutton half-cooked; but the next time you fall into my hands beware."

The next morning, Fire-eater called Pinocchio to him.

"What is your father's name?" he asked.

"Gepetto," said Pinocchio.

"What is his trade?" asked Fire-eater.

"He is a beggar," said Pinocchio.

"Does he get much money?" asked the showman.

"No," said Pinocchio. "He never has a penny

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in his pocket. He had to sell the only coat he had to buy a spelling book so that I could go to school."

"Poor fellow!" said Fire-eater. "I feel sorry for him. Here are five gold pieces. Go at once and take them to him."

Pinocchio thanked the showman a thousand times. Then he said good-by to the marionettes and set out for home.

THE FOX AND THE CAT

He had not gone far when he met a fox lame in one foot, and a cat blind in both eyes. The fox, because he was lame, was leaning on the cat, and the cat, because she was blind, was led by the fox.

"Good day, Pinocchio," said the fox in a very friendly way.

"How do you happen to know my name?" asked the marionette.

"Oh, I know your father well," said the fox.

"Where did you see him?" asked Pinocchio.

"I saw him yesterday at the door of his house," said the fox. "He had no coat and he was

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shivering with the cold."

"Poor papa!" said Pinocchio; "but that will soon be over. He shall shiver no more."

"Why?" asked the fox.

"Because I have become a gentleman," said Pinocchio.

"You have become a gentleman?" said the fox with a rude laugh.

The cat also began to laugh, but she combed her whiskers with her paws and Pinocchio did not see her.

"There is nothing to laugh at," said Pinocchio.

Then he took out the money that Fire-eater had given to him.

"You can see for yourselves that here are five gold pieces," he said.

As the money rang in his hand, the fox put out the paw that had been lame, and the cat opened her eyes, which looked like two green lanterns; but she shut them so quickly that Pinocchio did not see her.

"And now," said the fox, "what will you do with all this money?"

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"First of all," replied the marionette, "I shall buy a new coat for my papa. Then I shall buy a spelling book for myself."

"For yourself?" said the fox.

"Yes, indeed," said Pinocchio. "I intend to go to school and study."

"Look at me," said the fox. "Because I wished to study, I have lost a leg."

"Look at me," said the cat. "Because I wished to study, I have lost the sight of both my eyes."

At that moment, a blackbird that sat in the hedge beside the road began to sing.

"Pinocchio," he said, "do not listen to what bad companions tell you. If you do, you will be sorry."

Poor blackbird! It would have been well for him if he had not spoken; for the cat sprang upon him and ate him in one mouthful.

"Poor blackbird!" said Pinocchio. "Why did you treat him so badly?"

"I did it to teach him a lesson," said the cat. "He will learn not to meddle in the affairs of other people."

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When they had gone a little farther, the fox stopped and said to Pinocchio, "Would you like to double your money?"

"In what way?" asked Pinocchio.

"Would you like to turn your five gold pieces into a hundred or a thousand?" asked the fox.

"I think so," said Pinocchio; "but in what way?"

"The way is easy," said the fox. "Instead of going home, you must go with us to the Land of the Owls."

Pinocchio thought a moment.

"No," he said, "I will not go with you. I will go home to my papa. Who knows how badly he felt yesterday when I did not come back! I was a bad boy, and the talking cricket was right when he said, 'Woe to those boys who disobey their parents and run away from home.' Only yesterday, I almost lost my life in Fire-eater's house."

"Well, go home then," said the fox; "and so much the worse for you."

"Yes, so much the worse for you," said the cat.

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"Between to-day and to-morrow your five gold pieces would become a thousand," said the fox.

"How could they become so many?" asked Pinocchio.

"I will tell you," said the fox. "In the Land of the Owls, there is a place called the Field of Wonders. If you plant one gold piece in that field and water it with two pails of water, it will begin to grow. Then you must go to bed and sleep until morning. The next day you will find a beautiful tree with as many gold pieces on it as there are leaves on a cherry tree."

When Pinocchio heard this, he forgot all about his papa and the new coat. He also forgot about the spelling book and the school. He said to the fox and the cat, "Come let us start at once. I will go with you."

THE GRAY GOOSE INN

Pinocchio and his companions walked and walked until they came to the Gray Goose Inn.

"It is almost night," said the fox, "and we are very tired. Let us stop to eat and rest ourselves for an hour or two. We will start

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again at midnight, so that we may reach the Field of Wonders to-morrow morning."

So they went into the inn and ordered their supper.

The cat ate nothing but fish. The fox ate a rabbit and some fat chickens. Pinocchio ate the least of all. He ordered some walnuts and a piece of bread, but he left them on his plate. He could think of nothing but the Field of Wonders and the gold pieces.

After supper, the three companions went to bed. The cat and the fox slept in one room and Pinocchio in another. They told the inn-keeper to call them at midnight, so they could go on their journey.

Pinocchio soon fell asleep and dreamed that he was in a field full of trees that were covered with gold pieces. He was just about to reach out his hand and pick them, when he was awakened by a knocking on the door of his room.

It was the inn-keeper, who had come to tell him that the clock had struck midnight.

"Are the others ready?" asked the marionette.

"Ready!" said the inn-keeper. "They left

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two hours ago."

"Why were they in such a hurry?" asked Pinocchio.

"Because the cat heard that her oldest kitten had frozen its feet and was in danger of death," said the inn-keeper.

"Did they pay for their supper?" asked Pinocchio.

"Certainly not!" said the inn-keeper. "They would not think of hurting your feelings by paying for it."

"And where did my friends say they would wait for me?" asked the marionette.

"They will meet you at the Field of Wonders to-morrow morning," said the inn-keeper.

So Pinocchio paid a gold piece for his supper and that of his friends. Then he set out. It was so dark he could not see the road, and he stumbled along without knowing where he was going. Some night-birds flew across the road and brushed Pinocchio's nose with their wings as they passed. They frightened him so much that he called out, "Who goes there? Who goes there?"

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After he had walked a little farther, he saw a small insect that was shining dimly on the trunk of a tree. It looked like a night-lamp.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am the ghost of the talking cricket," said a very weak and faint voice.

"What do you want?" asked Pinocchio.

"I want to give you some advice," said the voice. "Go back and take the four gold pieces to your poor father, who is very sad because you did not come back."

"By to-morrow my papa will be a gentleman," said Pinocchio. "These four gold pieces will then be four thousand."

"My boy, do not believe those who promise to make you rich in a day. They are sure to be rogues. Listen to me and go back," said the voice.

"No, I shall not go back," said Pinocchio. "I have made up my mind to go on."

"The hour is late," said the voice.

"I have decided to go on," said he.

"The night is dark," said the voice.

"I have decided to go on," said he.

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"The road is dangerous," said the voice.

"I have decided to go on," said he.

"Remember that boys who will have their own way, sooner or later are sorry for it," said the voice. "Good night, Pinocchio; and may you be saved from the assassins."

As soon as the talking cricket had said this, it became dark, as if the light had been blown out; and the road was darker than ever.

THE ASSASSINS

As the marionette went on his way, he said, "Boys ought to be pitied. Everybody scolds us and tries to tell us what to do. The talking cricket tells me I am to meet assassins. But that doesn't matter, for I don't believe in assassins. I have never believed in them. I think our papas make up stories about them to scare little boys who wish to go out at night. If I should meet assassins on this road, do you think they would frighten me? Not the least in the world. I should go to meet them and say, 'Assassins, what do you want of me? Remember there is no joking with me! So go on about your

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business!' When I had said this, I think they would run away like the wind. However, if they did not have sense enough to run away, then I should run away myself. And that would be an end of it."

Pinocchio had hardly time to finish saying all this to himself when he heard a slight rustle of leaves behind him. He turned to look and dimly saw two objects wrapped in black cloaks. They were running after him, at full speed.

"Here they are now," he said to himself.

He did not know where to hide his gold pieces, so he put them in his mouth and held them under his tongue.

Then he tried to escape. But he had not gone a step before he was seized by the arms and heard two awful voices say to him, "Your money or your life!"

Pinocchio could not speak because the money was in his mouth, but he gave several low bows by way of saying, "I have not a penny in my pocket."

"Come now! Let us have no nonsense," said the robbers.

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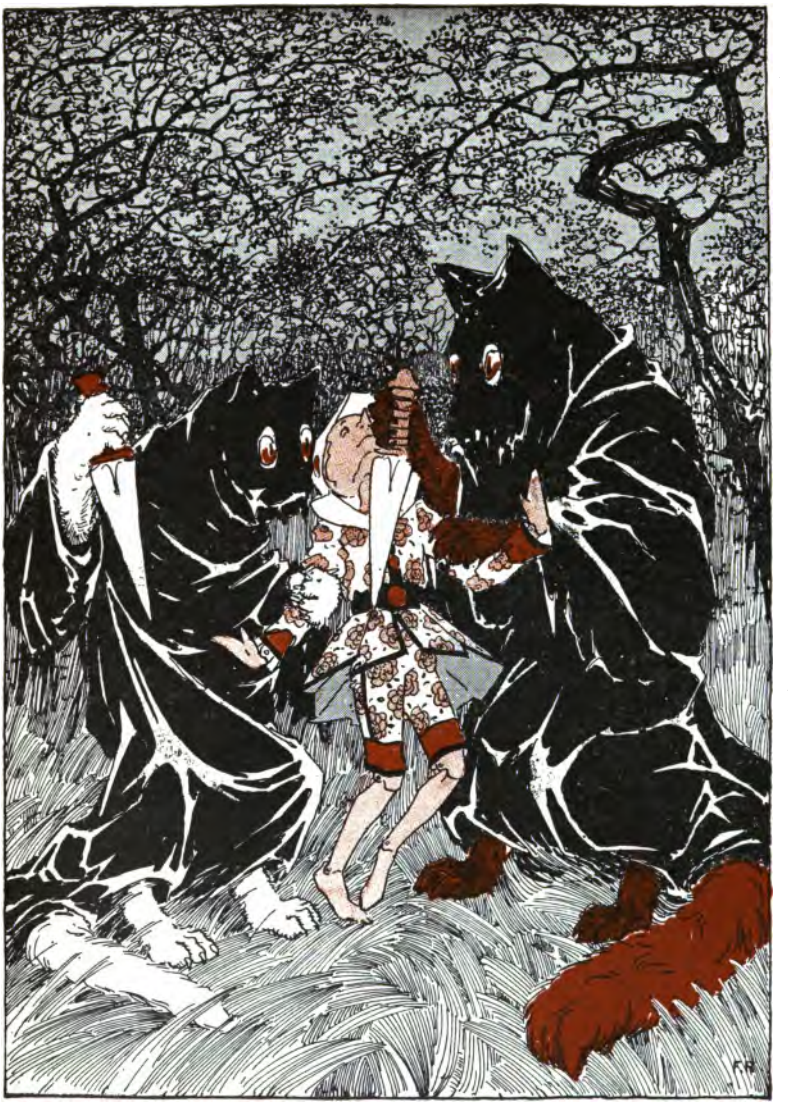

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"Give up your money or you shall die," said the taller of them.

"After we have killed you, we will kill your father," said the other.

"No, no; not my poor papa!" cried Pinocchio. As he said this, the gold pieces rattled in his mouth.

"O you rascal!" said the taller of the robbers. "You have hidden the money in your mouth. Take it out at once!"

Then the shorter assassin drew out an ugly knife and tried to force it between Pinocchio's lips. But Pinocchio, as quick as lightning, bit off his hand and let it fall to the ground. Just think how surprised he was then to see that it was not a hand at all, but the paw of a cat.

Then Pinocchio freed himself from the assassins. He jumped over the hedge and began to run through the fields. They ran after him like two dogs chasing a rabbit. The one who had lost a paw, ran on three legs; but I do not know how he managed to run so well.

After a race of several miles, Pinocchio could run no further. So he climbed up the trunk

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of a very tall pine-tree and seated himself on the topmost branch. The assassins tried to climb after him; but after they had gone up half way, they slid down again, tearing the skin from their hands and knees.

Then the assassins gathered some dry wood, piled it under the pine-tree and set fire to it. In less time than it takes to tell it, the tree began to burn like a candle. Pinocchio saw the flames come nearer, and as he did not wish to be roasted, he jumped from the top of the tree and started to run across the fields. The assassins ran after him without stopping once.

When day began to dawn, they were still following him. Soon, Pinocchio came to a wide ditch full of dirty water. What was he to do? "One, two, three," cried he, and leaped to the other side.

The assassins also jumped, but—splash, splash! . . . they fell into the middle of the ditch. Pinocchio heard the splash and shouted back, "A fine bath to you, assassins!"

He thought they would be drowned; but when he looked back, he saw they were both running

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after him. They still wore their black cloaks, and the water was dripping from them, as if they had been hollow baskets.

PINOCCHIO HUNG ON THE BIG OAK

Pinocchio's courage at last failed him, and he was about to give himself up for lost; but all at once he saw not far away a small house as white as snow.

"If I can only reach that house," he said to himself, "maybe I shall be saved."

He soon reached the house and knocked at the door.

No one answered.

He knocked again and again with great force, for there was no time to lose. He could already hear the steps and heavy breathing of the assassins. Still no one answered.

Seeing that it was useless to knock, Pinocchio began to kick the door with all his might. The window opened, and a beautiful fairy appeared at it. She had blue hair and a face as white as snow. But her eyes were closed and she did not see him. He was about to speak; but before

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he could open his mouth, he felt himself seized by the collar, while the horrible voices of the assassins said to him, "You shall not escape from us again!"

When the marionette saw death staring him in the face, he trembled so much that his wooden legs creaked and the gold pieces once more rattled in his mouth.

"Now then," said the assassins, "will you open your mouth, or not? Will you not answer? This time we shall force you to open it."

Then they drew out two long knives and tried to stab Pinocchio. But the marionette was made of very hard wood, and the knives were broken into a thousand pieces.

"I know what we shall do," said one of them. "Let us hang him."

"Yes, let us hang him," said the other.

So they tied Pinocchio's arms behind him, and hung him to the branch of a tree called the big oak.

Then they sat down on the grass and waited for him to die. But at the end of three hours the marionette's eyes were open, his mouth was

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shut, and he was kicking more than ever.

At last, they were out of patience. So they said to Pinocchio, "Good-by till to-morrow. Let us hope that you will be kind enough to die with your mouth open."

Then they went away.

Little by little, the marionette's eyes began to grow dim; but he still hoped that some one would come to save him. At last, his breath began to fail him. He shut his eyes, opened his mouth, and hung as if he were dead.

PINOCCHIO IS SAVED BY THE FAIRY WITH BLUE HAIR

While Pinocchio was hanging to the branch of the big oak, the beautiful fairy with blue hair looked out of the window and saw him. She felt so sorry for him that she sent a great dog to rescue him and bring him to her.

As soon as the dog returned with Pinocchio, the fairy took him up in her arms and laid him gently on a bed. Then she sent for three famous doctors.

The doctors came at once. One was a crow, one was an owl, and one was a talking cricket.

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"Doctors," said the fairy, "I wish to know if this marionette is alive or dead."

When she had said this, the crow felt Pinocchio's pulse. Then he felt his nose. Then he felt of his toes. When he had done this, he said, "I think the marionette is quite dead. If he is not dead, it is a sign that he is still alive."

"I regret," said the owl, "that I cannot agree with the crow. In my opinion, the marionette is still alive; but if he is not alive, it is a sign that he is dead."

"And have you nothing to say?" the fairy asked of the talking cricket.

"In my opinion," said the cricket, "the wisest thing for a doctor to do, when he does not know what he is talking about, is to be silent. This marionette has a face that is not new to me. I have known him for some time."

Up to this time, Pinocchio had been lying as still as if he were dead. Now he began to tremble so much that he shook the bed.

"That marionette there," added the talking cricket, "is a rogue."

Pinocchio opened his eyes, but shut them again

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at once.

"He is a good-for-nothing run-away."

Pinocchio hid his face under the covers.

"That marionette is a bad boy who will make his poor father die of a broken heart."

All at once sounds of sobbing and crying were heard under the covers.

"When a dead person cries, it is a sign that he will get well," said the crow.

"I do not like to disagree with you," said the owl; "but when a dead person cries, it is a sign that he is sorry to die."

PINOCCHIO REFUSES THE MEDICINE

When the three doctors had gone, the fairy placed her hand on Pinocchio's head and found it so hot that she knew he had a fever. Then she poured some medicine into half a glass of water and offered it to the marionette.

"Drink it," she said, "and in a few days you will be cured."

Pinocchio looked at the glass and drew up his face.

"Is it sweet or bitter?" he asked.

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"It is bitter," said the fairy; "but it will do you good."

"If it is bitter, I will not take it," said he.

"Drink it," said the fairy; "and when you drink it, I will give you a lump of sugar to take away the taste."

"Where is the lump of sugar?" asked Pinocchio.

"Here it is," said the fairy, as she took a piece from the sugar-bowl.

"Give me the lump of sugar first," said Pinocchio. "Then I will drink the medicine."

So the fairy gave him the sugar and he swallowed it in an instant.

"Now keep your promise, and take the medicine," said the fairy.

Pinocchio took up the glass and smelled of the medicine. Then he put it down again.

"It is too bitter," he complained. "I cannot drink it."

"How can you say that," asked the fairy, "when you have not even tasted it?"

"I know it from the smell," said Pinocchio. Then he added, "I would rather die than drink

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that bitter medicine."

Just then, the door opened and four black rabbits entered. They were carrying a couch that was tied to some long poles.

Pinocchio was so frightened that he sat up in bed.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"We have come for you," said the largest rabbit.

"To take me?" asked Pinocchio. "But I am not dead yet."

"No, not yet," said the rabbit; "but you have only a few minutes to live. You have refused the medicine that would have cured you."

"O Fairy, Fairy!" screamed the marionette. "Give me the medicine! Give me the medicine! I will not die! I will not die!"

So taking the glass in his hands, he swallowed the medicine at once; and when he turned around, the rabbits had gone.

A marionette is made of wood, and is seldom ill, and can be cured very quickly; so in a few minutes Pinocchio became well and jumped down from the bed.

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When the fairy saw him running and capering about the room, she said, "Then my medicine must have done you good."

"Well, I should think so," said Pinocchio. "It has saved my life."

"Then why did you have to be coaxed to take it?" asked the fairy.

"It is this way," said Pinocchio. "We boys are more afraid of medicine than of being ill."

"That is disgraceful!" said the fairy. "Boys ought to know that a good remedy will save them from illness and, perhaps, from death."

"Another time," said Pinocchio, "I shall not require so much coaxing. I shall remember those black rabbits, and shall take the medicine at once."

Then Pinocchio told the fairy all that had happened to him since he left his home. He told her about Fire-eater, about the fox and the cat, and about the assassins. Then he thanked her for having saved him from a terrible death on the old oak tree, and he said he should always love her for being so kind to him.

—*C. Collodi.*

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THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES OF NILS

Nils was a boy about twelve years old, long, loose-jointed, and tow-headed. He was not good for much. His chief delight was to eat and sleep, and after that, he liked best to make mischief.

One Sunday morning the boy's parents were getting ready to go to church. The boy thought how lucky it was that both father and mother were going away, so that the coast would be clear for a couple of hours.

But just as his father was ready to start, he stopped short, turned toward the boy and said:

"Since you won't come to church with mother and me, the least you can do is to read the lesson at home. Will you promise to do so?"

"Yes," said the boy, "I can do that easily enough."

He thought, of course, that he wouldn't read any more than he felt like reading.

Then the father and the mother went to church. As the boy stood in the doorway watching them, he thought he had been caught in a trap.

"There they go," said he to himself, "think-

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ing that I'll have to sit and read that sermon the whole time they are away."

The boy stood for a long time wondering whether he should read the sermon or not. Finally he came to the conclusion that it was best to be obedient. He seated himself in the easy chair and began to read, but when he had been reading for a little while, he began to nod.

The boy read and nodded and tried to keep awake. "No, I don't want to fall asleep," thought he, "for then I'll not get through with this."

But somehow he fell asleep.

He did not know whether he had slept a little while or a long while; but he was awakened by hearing a slight noise behind him.

On the window-sill, facing the boy, stood a small looking-glass; and almost the entire cottage could be seen in it. As the boy raised his head, he happened to look in the glass; and then he saw that his mother's chest had been opened.

His mother owned a great oaken chest, which she permitted no one but herself to open. Here she kept all the things her mother had left her. Here lay two old-fashioned dresses of red cloth.

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There were starched white caps and heavy silver ornaments and chains. Several times his mother had thought of getting rid of the old things, but she hadn't had the heart to do it.

Now the boy could see in the mirror that the chest lid was open. He could not understand how this had happened, for his mother had closed the chest before she went away. She never would have left that precious chest open when he was at home alone.

He was afraid a thief had sneaked into the cottage. He didn't dare to move, but sat still and stared into the mirror.

While he sat there and waited for the thief to appear, he began to wonder what that dark shadow was that fell across the edge of the chest. He looked and looked, for he could not believe his eyes. At last he saw that it was an elf who sat on the edge of the chest.

THE ELF

The boy had heard stories about elves, but he had never dreamed that they were such tiny creatures. This one who sat on the edge of the chest was no taller than a hand's breadth.

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He had an old wrinkled face, and was dressed in a black coat, knee-breeches and a broad-brimmed black hat. He was looking at something in the chest and did not know the boy had awakened.

The boy was somewhat surprised to see the elf, but he was not very much frightened. It was impossible to be afraid of one who was so little. Since the elf was so lost in thought, the boy thought it would be great fun to play a trick on him, and push him into the chest and close the lid.

But the boy was not brave enough to touch the elf with his hands. He looked around the room for something to poke him with. His eyes wandered from the sofa to the table and from the table to the fireplace. He looked at the kettles and at the knives and forks and saucers and plates, which he could see through the half-open cupboard door.

He looked at his father's gun which hung on the wall and at the geraniums which bloomed in the window. At last he caught sight of an old butterfly net that hung on the window frame.

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He had hardly set eyes on the butterfly net before he reached over and snatched it. Then he jumped up, swung the net along the edge of the chest, and astonished himself with the luck he had. He hardly knew how he managed it, but he actually caught the elf.

The poor little chap lay head downward at the bottom of the net and could not free himself. The boy hadn't the least idea what he should do with the prize. He stood waving the net backward and forward to prevent the elf from climbing out.

The elf began to speak and to beg pitifully for his freedom. He said he had brought good luck to the family for many years and he ought to be treated better.

"If you will let me go," said he, "I will give you a silver spoon and a gold penny as big as the case on your father's watch."

The boy didn't think this was a very good offer, but had begun to be afraid of the elf and was glad to be rid of him.

For this reason he at once agreed to the bargain, and held the net still so that the elf could

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crawl out of it. But when the elf was almost out, the boy happened to think that he should have made a better bargain. He should have asked for all sorts of good things.

"What a fool I was to let him go!" thought he, as he shook the net so the elf tumbled down again.

But the instant the boy did this, he received a stinging box on the ear, and thought his head would fly to pieces. He was dashed first against one wall and then against the other. At last he fell to the floor and lay there senseless.

When he awoke, he was alone in the cottage. The chest-lid was down, and the butterfly net hung in its usual place by the window. If he had not still felt the box on his ear, he would have believed the whole thing was a dream.

"Father and mother will be sure to say it was nothing else," thought he. "They are not likely to make any allowance for that old sermon on account of the elf. It is best for me to go back to that reading again."

As he walked toward the table, he noticed something remarkable. Could it be possible that

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the cottage had grown? Why was he obliged to take so many more steps than usual to get to the table?

And what was the matter with the chair? It looked no bigger than it always had, but now he had to step on the rung first and then climb up in order to reach the seat. It was the same with the table. He couldn't look over the top of it without climbing to the arm of the chair.

"What in the world does this mean?" asked the boy. "I believe the elf has bewitched the arm-chair and the table."

The Bible lay on the table, and there was something queer about that, too; for he could not read a single word without standing on the book itself. The boy read one or two lines and then chanced to look up. He glanced at the looking-glass and then cried aloud:

"Look! There's another one!"

In the glass he saw a little creature who wore a hood and leather breeches.

"Why, this one is dressed exactly like me!" said the boy, as he clasped his hands in astonishment.

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But when he clasped his hands, the little man in the mirror did the same thing. He ran around the mirror to see if there wasn't a little man hiding behind it, but he found no one there.

At last the boy began to shake with terror. Now he knew that the elf had bewitched him and that the little creature he saw in the mirror was himself.

The boy could not make himself believe that he had been changed into an elf.

"It can't be anything but a dream," thought he. "If I wait a few moments, I shall be turned back into a human being again."

He placed himself before the mirror and closed his eyes. He opened them again in a minute or two, and then expected to find that it had all passed over,—but it hadn't. He remained just as little as ever.

In other respects he was the same as before. The straw-colored hair, the freckles on his nose, the patches on his leather breeches and the darns on his stockings were just the same—but they were much smaller.

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He was certain now that it would do him no good to wait. He must try something else. He thought the wisest thing he could do would be to try to find the elf and make his peace with him.

While he was looking for the elf, the boy cried and prayed and promised everything he could think of. Never would he break his word to anyone. Never would he fall asleep again over the sermon. If he might be a human being once more, he would be a good and obedient boy. But no matter how much he promised, it did not help him the least little bit.

Suddenly he remembered that he had heard his mother say that all the tiny folk made their home in the cowsheds. He decided to go there and see if he couldn't find the elf.

It was a lucky thing that the cottage door was partly open, for he could never have reached the bolt and opened it. Now he slipped through without any difficulty.

On the board-walk in front of the cottage hopped a gray sparrow. He had hardly set eyes on the boy before he called out:

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"Tee! Tee! Look at Nils Gooseboy! Look at Thumbytot! Look at Nils Thumbytot!"

Then the geese and the chickens turned and stared at Nils; and they began to hiss and cackle.

"Cock-a-doodle-do!" said the rooster. "Good enough for him! He pulled my comb!"

"Ka-ka-kada!" said the hens. "Served you right! Served you right!"

The strangest thing of all was that Nils understood what they said. He was so astonished that he exclaimed:

"It must be because I am changed into an elf. That is probably why I understand bird-talk."

He could not endure hearing the hens say it served him right, so he threw a stone at them and shouted, "Shut up, you pack!"

But it hadn't occurred to him before that he was no longer the kind of boy the hens need fear. The whole flock of hens made a rush for him and formed a ring around him.

Nils tried to get away, but the chickens ran after him and screamed. It is more than likely

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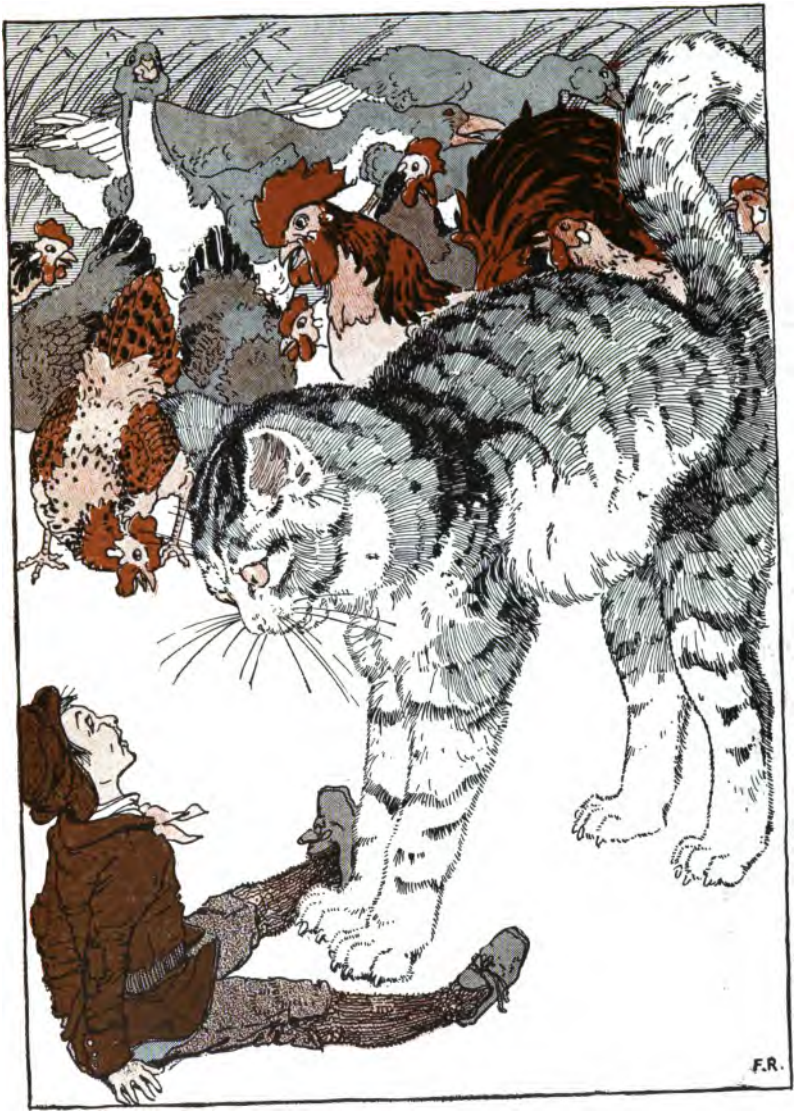

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that he couldn't have gotten away from them if the house cat hadn't come along just then. As soon as the chickens saw the cat, they became quiet and pretended to be scratching in the earth for worms.

Immediately Nils ran to the cat. "You dear pussy," said he, "you must know all the corners and hiding places about here. Now be a good kitty and tell me where I can find the elf."

"I know well enough where the elf lives," the cat said in a soft voice, "but that doesn't mean that I shall tell you about it."

"Dear pussy, you must tell me where the elf lives," said the boy. "Can't you see he has bewitched me?"

The cat opened his green eyes a little and said, "Perhaps you expect me to help you because you have so often pulled my tail."

That made Nils angry. He forgot how little and helpless he was, and rushed toward the cat, saying: "Oh! I can pull your tail again, I can."

The next instant the cat was so changed that the boy hardly knew him. Every hair on his body stood on end. His tail had grown thick.

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His eyes glistened like sparks of fire.

Nils didn't want to let himself be scared by a cat and he took a step forward. Then the cat made one spring and landed right on the boy and knocked him down. Her paws were on the boy's chest and his jaws, over his throat.

Nils shrieked for help, but no one came. He thought his last hour had come. But then the cat let go and said:

"There, that will do! I'll let you go this time for the sake of my mistress. I only wanted you to know which one of us is the stronger."

Now Nils crawled up on the hedge and began to think how surprised his parents would be when they came home from church! It was too horrible to think about. He wished that no human being should ever see him again.

THE WILD GEESE

Several flocks of wild geese flew by. They flew very high, but he could hear them call: "To the hills! Now we're off to the hills!"

When the wild geese saw the tame geese at the farm, they sank nearer the earth and called:

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"Come along! Come along! We're off to the hills!"

The tame geese raised their heads and listened. Then they answered: "We are pretty well off where we are! We are pretty well off where we are!"

More and more wild geese flew by and at last the tame geese became very restless. One young gander said: "If another flock comes this way, I'll fly away, too."

Soon another flock came and called like the others and a young gander answered: "Wait a minute! Wait a minute! I'm coming!"

He spread his wings and raised himself into the air, but he was not used to flying and fell to the ground again.

The wild geese must have heard him call, for they flew back to see if he was coming.

"Wait! Wait!" he cried, as he made another attempt to fly.

Nils heard all that was said and thought he ought to do something.

"It would be a great pity," thought he, "if the big goosey-gander should fly away. It would

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be a great loss to father and mother if he was gone when they came home from church."

He forgot how little and helpless he was and leaped down into the goose-flock. He threw his arms around the goosey-gander's neck and said, "Oh, no; you can't fly away this time!"

The gander was just ready to raise himself from the ground. He couldn't stop to shake off the boy, so he had to take him along with him.

Before Nils had time to think he ought to let go of the gander's neck, he was so high up that he would have been killed if he had let go. The only thing he could do was to climb up on the gander's back. He held fast to the feathers to keep from tumbling to the ground.

The geese flew onward all the rest of the day. The tame gander could hardly keep up with the others, but they only called to him:

"Fly faster. It is easier to fly fast than slowly!"

At last the tame gander could fly no further and settled down on the shore of a lake where he could rest and drink some of the clear water. The other geese saw what the gander had done,

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and they turned back to swim in the lake.

The geese stayed at the lake for many days, but one night it was so cold the lake froze over. Until that time Nils had slept on the shore. Now he was able to go out on the ice and sleep with the geese.

One night he was awakened by the geese who were squawking and flapping their wings. He looked about him and saw a small long-legged dog running over the ice with a goose in his mouth.

Nils thought it was a dog, but it was Cunning Fox instead. He ran after the fox and called: "Drop that goose! Drop that goose!"

Cunning Fox did not know who was calling him and ran as fast as he could. He ran straight for the forest, and the boy followed him.

At last Nils caught up with the fox and seized hold of his tail.

"Now I'll take that goose away from you," Nils cried; but he was not strong enough to stop the fox. The fox dragged Nils along until the dry leaves whirled around him; but at last he stopped to see what had hold of his tail.

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Cunning Fox put the goose on the ground, held it with his paw and looked back at Nils.

"Now run away," said he, "for I am going to bite off the goose's head."

Nils took a firm hold on the tail, braced against a tree and pulled as hard as he could. Cunning Fox was so surprised that his paw slipped off the goose and she flew away.

Then the fox made a dash for the boy. "If I don't get one, I shall have the other," said he.

"Don't you believe it," said Nils, who was in high spirits because he had saved the goose.

Then there was such a dance in that forest that the dry birch leaves fairly flew. Cunning Fox swung around and around, but the tail swung, too, and the boy kept a grip on it, so the fox couldn't grab him.

At last Nils caught sight of a young birch-tree that shot up as straight as a rod. Quick as a flash he let go of the tail and climbed the tree. Cunning Fox was so wild he danced around after his tail for a long time.

Finally Nils called out, "Don't try to dance any longer, Cunning Fox."

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When the fox saw he had been fooled, he lay down under the tree to wait for the boy to come down. But the boy did not come down.

Late in the morning a goose came flying near the birch-tree. She was flying low and Cunning Fox jumped and tried to catch her, but he missed her.

It was not long before another goose came flying near the birch-tree. Cunning Fox tried to catch her, but she got away from him and flew to the lake.

Then another goose came and another until the whole flock had flown past. Suddenly Cunning Fox remembered his prisoner and looked toward the birch-tree. As might have been expected, Nils had escaped.

—*Selma Lagerlof.*

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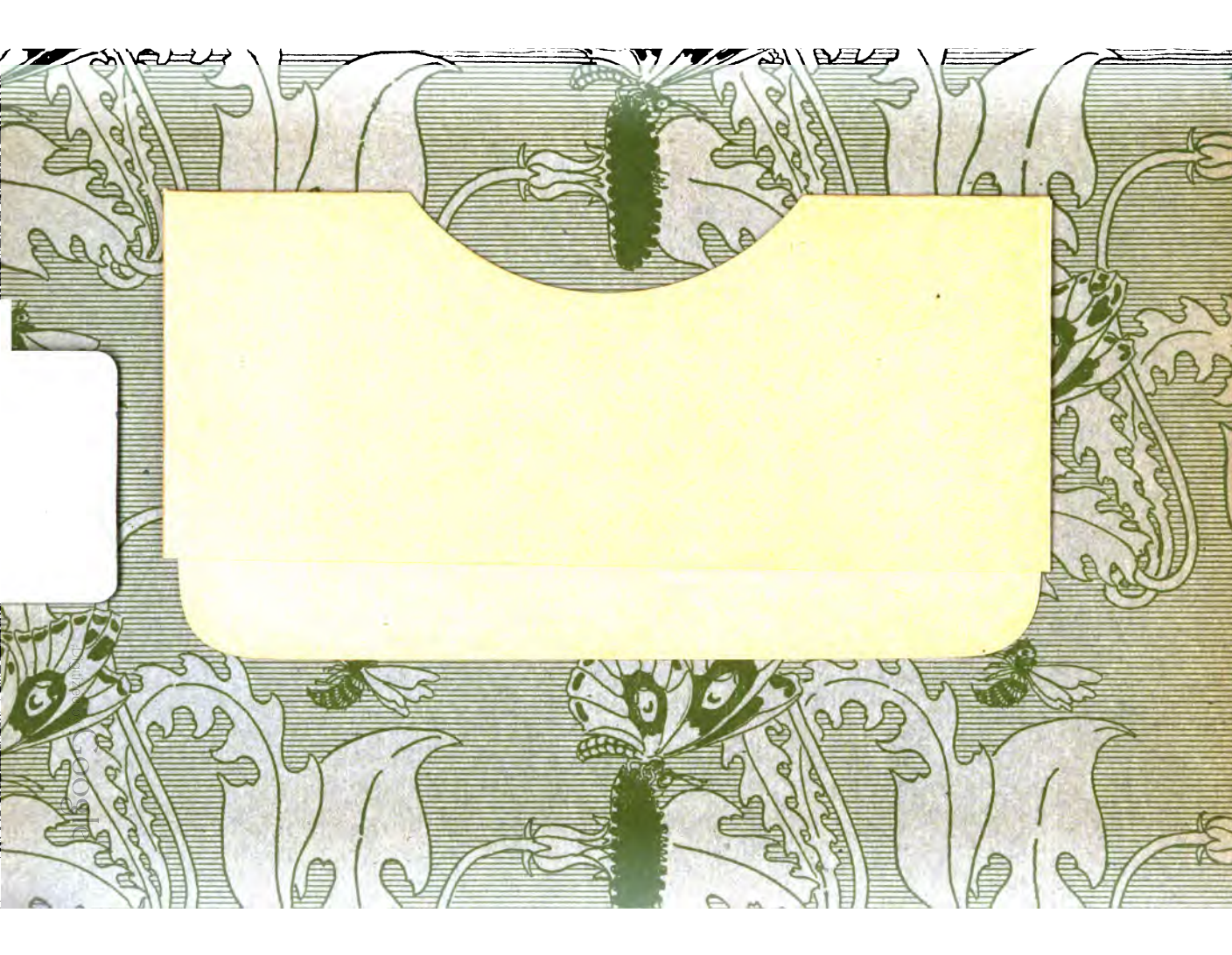

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